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MEMOIRS

OF

CHARLES LEE LEWES,

COMEDIAN.

VOL. II.

MEMOIRS

OF

CHARLES LEE LEWES,

CONTAINING

ANECDOTES,

HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL,

OF THE

ENGLISH AND SCOTTISH STAGES,

DURING A PERIOD OF FORTY YEARS.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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MEMOIRS

OF

CHARLES LEE LEWES, Esq.

Miss Farren.

IT is well known, that Mr. Younger was the occasion of the celebrated Miss Farren's introduction to the London stage; and that his generous and friendly aid and protection laid the foundation of the future splendour of herself and family.

In Mr. Tate Wilkinson's Memoirs of his own Life, he has unnecessarily weighed in his partial scales the living merit of Miss Farren, and the dead merit of Mrs. Woffington.

In wit, beauty, figure, and professional abilities, he has fixed an equal beam; and no one, I believe, will question the justice of the hand that holds it: but why might he not have blazoned the coat of the goddess of his idolatry, without making a blot in Woffington's scutcheon? Why tell us, that in the race of virtue, Miss Farren, Atalanta-like, outstrips the benevolent, the noble spirited Woffington? May Miss Farren long live the *pattern of virtue*, and may the faults of the departed *frail* one be forgotten!

But in the race of charity (a capital virtue) I will not yield the palm to Miss Farren. Mr. Wilkinson tells us, Miss Farren has settled an annuity upon her mother: I call this *duty*, and heaven will reward her for it. But do not, in this instance, let us rob poor

Woffington of her due. As Mr. Wilkinson has thought it necessary to bring the *virtue* of Miss Farren more forward in the canvas, by placing Mrs. Woffington's *faults* in the back-ground, I shall take the liberty (without wishing in the least to lessen the merits of Miss Farren), in the following picture, to place her in the fore-ground.

MISS WOFFINGTON.

In taking a comparative view of the filial merits of two ladies, namely, of Miss Woffington that *was* great, and Miss Farren that *is*, it does not, nor should not follow, that though Miss Woffington's many acts of charity deserve to be mentioned to her honour, that Miss Farren's benevolent propensities are not praise-worthy.

Mrs. Woffington was, in her earliest

infancy, a child of indigence: her father was an honest labouring man; he died, perhaps luckily for her, when she had not arrived at two years of age. Her mother earned a scanty livelihood for her two daughters, by hawking fruit about the streets of Dublin; with the youngest (the honourable Mrs. Cholmondeley) on her breast, and Peggy, the charming, lovely Peggy, trotting by her side. This sordid life the mother and her unhappy orphans led for some years. I have met with more than one in Dublin, who assured me, that they remember to have seen the lovely Peggy, with a little dish upon her hand, and without shoes to cover her delicate feet, crying through College-green, Dame-street, and other parts of that end of the town—"All this fine young sallad for a halfpenny—all for a halfpenny; all for a halfpenny here!"

The little creature's frequent visits to the college, in the way of her profession; her early wit, and the sweet features she was blest with, recommended her to the notice of many generous young students of the university, who were even then, when she was scarcely nine years old, extremely lavish in the praises of her wit and beauty.

There was at this time a foreign lady of the name of Madame Vilante, whose surprising performances on the tight-rope, (never seen there before) with her pupils, drew vast crowds to a booth she had erected in George's-lane, which now, since the reform in lighting, paving, and other improvements of that elegant city, is known by the name of Great George-street, probably in honour of our present gracious Sovereign; since the commencement of whose happy reign, more has been done

for the emolument of that loyal, though much oppressed nation, and that within these twenty years last past, than was for five hundred years before.

Madame's theatrical booth was, whether by chance or design, built in the very neighbourhood of an elegant playhouse, known at this time by the name of the Theatre Royal, Aungier-street, a spacious edifice, and then occupied by the best dramatic performers in the kingdom. There were four brothers of the name of Elrington, who, in their different walks, were held to be unrivalled. The elder, the famous *Tom*, shone brightest in the tyrants—he was there the original Zanga and Busiris, and had the honourable satisfaction of receiving the thanks of the author, Dr. Young, personally on the spot, who held him for a considerable time by the hand, and declared he had never

seen his *Moor* done such justice to as by him, acknowledging with some regret, that Mills senior did but growl and mouth the character.

There is an anecdote recorded of the above-named distinguished tragedian, which may not unaptly be related here. When the Distressed Mother was performed for the first time in Dublin, I think in the year 1713, Mr. Thomas Elrington performed the part of Orestes. He was much applauded, and very deservedly it seems, through the whole; but in the last scene, where his brain is so affected at an account of the death of his beloved Hermione, that he falls into an ungovernable madness, he acted so very naturally, that it had a dreadful effect on the sensorium of a musician in the orchestra. From the first start of the actor, when he wildly says—"Blow

winds! the murder'd lovers wait!—Hark, how they call—nay, if your blood still reeks, I'll mingle mine, &c." —he suddenly caught the infection in reality; and, as some travellers inform us that birds, squirrels, and many other animals, are so disordered by the fascinating power of the eyes of the rattle-snake, that they are entirely deprived of the power of avoiding their own certain destruction; so was it with this poor musician—he could not avert his eyes from the sight of the unreal "Mad Tom;" and before Orestes was carried off, the fatally affected son of Orpheus began to rave, stare, and discover other symptoms of the most outrageous madness. In short, he was removed from the playhouse to the madhouse, where he soon after died.

I must not omit in this place, that Mr. Elrington proved himself to be a

substantial friend to the widow and children of the poor man, of whose miserable death he had been the innocent cause.

The second brother of the Elringtons, then the props and supporters of the Irish stage, was named Frank, famous many years for acting the Miser, Sir Francis Gripe, and parts of the like cast. The third was Ralph, a very useful performer; and the youngest was known by the jolly appellation of *Honest Old Joe:* he was held in the same degree of estimation in Dublin, that Mr. Ryan was in London, and played fine gentlemen and young heroes, long after he had passed his grand climacteric. This last surviving branch of the Elringtonian family made his mortal exit from this stage of life in the month of December, 1755.

Why I have been so particular in

relating any memoirs of this brotherhood, was to introduce to my readers the persons who were the chief instruments of bringing on, and encouraging the lovely Peggy in her dramatic attempt on the stage. However, I must not forget to inform them, that she was first taken into the service of Madame Vilante, who taught her to dance for her own purpose. Here her uncommon agility and dexterity made her extremely popular. Being thus brought to an early acquaintance with a profession, which the immortal Rich looked upon as the very perfection of all scenic performances, no wonder that Peggy was admitted as a visitor at the Theatre Royal, as it was then presumptuously called; she there imbibed delicious draughts of the sweet intoxicating streams, which never fail to flow from

the well wrought pieces of our dramatic writers.

Now her young bosom panted for the wide extending hoop, the long rich train, laced shoes, and brocaded suits, instead of the long drawers, short jackets, and flat pumps, she was used to wear. Thus prejudiced against vaulting and highflying, and dangerous capering in the air, even sometimes above the clouds theatrical, she longed to give the admiring town some proofs of her capability of pleasing it, by appearing in some character of consequence on the boards below. Her mistress perceiving the bent of her genius that way, had her instructed in several *ballad-farcical* parts, such as Philida, and others; but above all, she excelled in the part of Nell, in the Devil to Pay; in which she received the instructions of the fond father-in-law of the cobler's innocent and

diverting wife. This was Mr. Charles Coffey,* who was then newly returned from London, whither he had wisely carried his piece after he had materially altered it from a farce written by Mr. Jevon, a player of Charles the Second's time. It is well known the part of Nell established the fame of Miss Raftor, afterwards Mrs. Clive. Mr. Coffey, very luckily for *lovely Peggy*, by frequenting the booth she belonged to, took a

* This ingenious gentleman was a schoolmaster, and taught youth for many years, in the place called Corn-Market, in the city of Dublin. Besides the alterations he confessedly made in Jevon's uncouth piece of the Devil of a Wife, by which it was greatly amended; he was the sole author of the Beggar's Wedding, an opera of great humour; but being of the local kind, and chiefly calculated for the meridian of Dublin, it was rejected by the London managers. He was author likewise of a large collection of poems of some humour.

mighty pleasure in instructing and using his good natured endeavours to cultivate her rising genius. In his favourite character of Nell, he was particularly assiduous in teaching her every applauded stroke he had observed in Miss Raftor's performance. Mr. Coffey's cares for her future welfare did not end there; he spoke warmly of his young pupil to Mr. Thomas Elrington, who was then manager of Aungier-street house, advising him by all means to engage her. He, fortunately for himself, followed the good man's advice, and though she had hardly reached her thirteenth year, put her on for many womanly characters—such as Mrs. Peachum, Mother Midnight in Farquhar's Twin Rivals, and other parts, which required humour in the performance of them. She continued under the management of the judicious El-

rington a good while, and met with great indulgence both from him and the town, but was obliged to quit his theatre, through the ill-treatment of the cynical John Ward, the grandfather of the Kembles and the Siddonses, who at that time bore some sway in the company. But she had wisely taken care to get herself engaged with a set of players who had the liberty of performing in a nobleman's house in the outskirts of the city, known by the name of Rainsford-street. This corps called themselves a *Commonwealth*.

The Rainsford-street company consisted principally of the following performers, who were well known, and received some years after at our London Theatres; Messrs. Luke and Isaac Sparks (brothers), Mr. John Barrington, Mr. Robert Layfield, Mr. Michael Dyer; and above all, Miss

Margaret Woffington, though last, not least upon the scale of merit. Her great theatrical exploits in London and Dublin, for a long succession of smiling years, have been recounted by other pens, therefore I shall say nothing of them here. But as I began with a comparison between her and Miss Farren, I hope I may, without the censure of being a prejudiced man, declare that, in my humble opinion, the lowly bred Woffington, far surpassed her rival in filial duty. Miss Woffington, like an affectionate child, supported her ancient parent, by prudently giving to the old woman even the little douceurs which were gathered for her on the stage, after she had gone through a dance that was approved. This she did, while she was yet very young, and had no manner of check upon her, so that, had she been so inclined, she might have

squandered these casual perquisites away in baubles and other unnecessary childish articles. When she arrived at the state of womanhood, and her great merit commanded a salary adequate to that merit, she settled an annuity of forty pounds upon her mother, with the addition of two changes of apparel yearly!!!—Peace to her manes! But I cannot quit this subject, without informing my readers, that lovely Peggy had a sister she most tenderly loved; she gave the amiable young creature an education which fitted her for appearing with great advantage in the world. She was so far from looking on her with the jealous eye of her rival in beauty, though generally allowed to surpass her in that feminine qualification, that she watched over her inexperienced youth with the laudable care of the most tender mother: and

though many irregularities attended her own manner of conducting herself through life, she was ever anxious for the safeguard of her sister's honour. She sent her to a foreign convent with a stipend for her maintenance little short of the allowance of a daughter of a nobleman; and when she had the offer of an unexceptionable match, she had her lovely relation married honourably to a gentleman who loved her, and happily made her a good husband.

Many of my readers have been misled by seeing a very fallacious account of the Farren family, which, for what purpose I cannot tell, has been published in many of our monthly magazines.

The ingenious Henry Fielding says somewhere, in his admirable novel of Tom Jones, that it is indispensably ne-

cessary for an author to have some knowledge of his subject before he sits down to write upon it. This axiom, I may truly say, was totally neglected by the historians who have so daringly palmed upon the public those spurious accounts of the Farrens.

I had no sooner compared the papers put into my hands by my undoubtedly well-informed friends, than I plainly perceived falsehood and ignorance to pervade the whole of their surreptitious memoirs.

The limits of this work will not enable me to lay before my readers such circumstantial and minute particulars, as will entirely obviate the misrepresentations of these misinformed biographers; I shall, therefore, content myself with casually adverting to the incorrectness of the memoirs alluded to.

The printed accounts already come

to hand, all agree, that Mr. George Farren, father of the celebrated actress of that name, and now Countess of Derby, was born in the city of Cork, in the kingdom of Ireland;—here is a palpable mis-statement. Mr. Farren was not a Munster man, nor was he bred an attorney, as his biographers would make us believe. That gentleman drew his first breath in the city of Dublin, and his father being a wine merchant, he was indented to him for five years, to serve as his clerk. His education was of the liberal kind; he was sent early in life to the most approved seminary in the kingdom, which was in Capel-street, Dublin; the master of it was the Rev. Moses Magill, formerly principal usher under Doctor Sheridan, grandfather of our English Demosthenes. His brother lived in the same street—his profession

was that of a modeller in plaister of Paris.

The public are already acquainted with Mr. Farren's introduction to a theatrical line of life, and his peregrinations have been so amply detailed by other pens, that a recapitulation of his dramatic adventures would be uninteresting and unnecessary. I shall, however, beg leave to relate an anecdote, which has never yet been published, relative to his application to Mr. Gibson, the well known and respected manager of a company of comedians many years ago at Liverpool.

Mr. Farren's abilities as a performer not meeting with that encouragement in Dublin which he expected, he was resolved to take the first opportunity of quitting Ierne's metropolis, and try his fortune in England. Arriving at

Liverpool, he applied to Mr. Gibson, then manager of the London company of Drury-lane, for a situation of even the lowest salary; but this modest offer of his service did not produce the expected success. "Our company, friend," said Gibson, "being formed and full ere we left London, cannot possibly admit of any addition. Thou hast told me, friend, that thou hast never tried thy talents on the stage, and it is an unalterable maxim with me to reject all superfluities of any kind. I will not entertain more cats than will kill mice; and therefore, as by thy own confession thou art not practised in the business of an actor, the most prudent course for thee would be to *push thyself* into some other way of life, which may support thee better. Whatever thy vain hope may flatter

thee with, expect not to keep up long the flashy appearance thou now dost make, shouldst thou engage with any travelling company of comedians. But lest, peradventure, thou shouldst lack wherewithal to answer for a bed and a supper, I make thee here a present of this half crown; thou dost look most pitifully lank, young man, but this may, if properly used by thee, prevent thy growing thinner for a short space of time." The exordium to this puritanical speech made poor Farren look blank; he thought proper, however, being in want of half-a-crown, to pocket the affront! and making his best bow to his monitor, he went back to his lodging.

Now, lest my reader should imagine I am amusing him with an ideal speech, I must inform him, or her, that Gibson

the player was bred a Quaker, and brought up in the most rigid discipline of that sect, till the pomps and vanities of this wicked world drew him off from the precise rules by which he had been hitherto used to square his life. The many hotbeds which are to be found in Covent-Garden, and the purlieus thereof, soon ripened in him the seeds of degeneracy, and, as he became a constant visitor to both the theatres, the *spirit* gave way to the *flesh*, and soon rendered him a proselyte to the doctrines of Otway, Dryden, and the sprightly Congreve, instead of the discourses of George Fox and James Nailor. The simplicity of his original discipline was not so wholly erased, but that the Quaker was still legible, and rendered him a ludicrous mixture of gravity, and stage-buffoonery.

In fine, he found, or thought he found, he had been imposed upon, by his father, mother, and the whole fraternity of *friends*, with whom he had for many years held almost exclusive converse. To gratify his sensual appetite, in opposition to parental authority, he cast off the trammels of a strictly pious education, and boldly listed among the *free and easy* sons of the church militant, established by the laws of England. Whilst he remained a *saint*, having the handling of a good deal of cash, he was so provident as to lay by some for future contingencies; and now it was much wanted, he was *read out* of the meeting of the Friends, and furthermore, reprobated by his parents, and his relatives in general. He had been for some time weaning himself from the peculiarities of the speech and garb of the Quakers,

and with facility both dressed and spoke like a man of the world. The stage, with all its fascinating charms, was looked forward to by young Gibson, but the same impediment which hindered Farren from an engagement at Liverpool, lay in the way of Gibson in London. But getting acquainted with Messrs. Bridgewater and Hippesley at a tavern in the Garden, and the houses being near their closing for the season, they were far from discouraging our new-made *Christian*,* they rather commend-

* However strange it may appear to many of my readers, that I here insinuate a distinction between a Quaker and a Christian—yet so it was in young Mr. Gibson's case—as he has been often heard to declare, that until he had been received into the bosom of the church of England, he had not received the sacrament of baptism, being not of the age of thirty. Fanatics, look to yourselves; if the seal of baptism be requisite and necessary to salvation!!!—It is said

ed his spirit; and the droll Hippesley, being upon the eve of opening his theatre at Bristol, he offered him a situation in his *corps*, with a promise of instruction and protection while he should remain with him. The old gentleman kept his word; and when he was recalled to his town engagement, he gave the young man a letter of recommendation to Mr. Dennis Herbert, with whom he remained a considerable time. His figure was a good one, and he was blessed with a prepossessing countenance, which gained him much applause, especially in the soft sighing lovers. Particular circumstances induced him to apply for a London engagement, which he without difficulty obtained from Mr.

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that Quakers have no pride. It is possible for the cynical slovenliness of Diogenes to trample on Plato's splendid garments, with more pride than Plato wore them.

Rich, where he remained for a long course of years, performing a respectable line of business. I have already informed my readers, that Mr. Gibson was bred up to quakerism, and though I have never heard of his morals being impeached for any action of his life, yet I am afraid that some of my serious readers will be apt to scruple my testimony in behalf of his moral rectitude, when they recollect the levity of his behaviour towards our adventurer George Farren.

A needy candidate for fame and bread presents himself, and addresses him in his official capacity, as manager of a company of players, whom he had a strong desire and pressing necessity to engage with; but, instead of a serious answer to his solicitation on that head, he is treated with levity and rudeness. This was cruel, you may

say, and indeed it seems so, at first sight: but Mr. Gibson was a man that had been accustomed long to make shrewd observations on men and manners. This premised, where is the wonder, that one thus qualified to form a judgment of people by their behaviour, should be moved to exercise his innocent humour in a manner no ways cruel, as he gave the applicant seasonable relief, accompanied with wholesome advice, to shun the rock that had been fatal to many a callous adventurer, very well perceiving that Farren was a finished character of that description? And in the like manner, it was well known, Gibson treated all pretenders to merit; for which purpose he ever made use of the grave and pithy stile of his quondam friends and brethren, which he preferred on these occasions to the rude common language of the

ungodly world. This palliation of a supposed outrage being committed by friend Gibson, against the amiable rules of good breeding, I owe to him, as he was a man universally respected, and remarkable for his probity and philanthropy.

MR. WILLIAM LEWIS.

The following whimsical particulars relative to Mr. William Lewis, elder brother to the well known king of grief, the prince of discontent, the father of calamity, the symbol of despair, and the type of sorrow, may not prove uninteresting. Mr. William Lewis was in every respect the reverse of his brother: he was sensible and witty, without sarcasm; well bred, and though a Welshman, without pride. I wish I could extend the compliment to his son—" O! what a falling off is there!

No more of that; that way madness lies!"

Mr. Lewis senior, was not only an amiable character in private life; his easy deportment, great professional talents, and scholastic education, made his agreeable conversation coveted by the learned, as well as the illiterate. These slight traits of his character will prepare the reader to give credit, without wonder, to the following tragi-comic scene.

It may be necessary to premise, that there is great reason to believe that the true art of theatrical puffing originated among our provincial actors. Whiteley might be reckoned, with respect to his excellence in this art, to be one of the first of itinerant puffers. So great was his skill in this practice, that old Ward, grandfather of Mrs. S——s, often lamented his in-

capacity for inventing such sublime advertisements, as came from his sworn foe and formidable competitor, Whiteley. Strange as it may appear, though the art of stage-puffing was of so low an origin, it is now arrived to such a respectable consequence, as to be practised as a most essential and indispensable support of our royal theatrical reputation. It has increased within these forty years so as to cause those bills of modest compass, which only contained the mere names of the stage dishes, to be extended with sheet pasted after sheet, so as to become a nuisance.

The following specimen will serve to shew that the art of theatrical puffing is not unpractised amongst the Spaniards; and it must be acknowledged our English puff theatricals are inferior to theirs in sublimity.

A SPANISH PLAY BILL.

To the Sovereign of Heaven—
To the Mother of the eternal world—
To the Polar Star of Spain—
To the faithful Protectress of the
Spanish Nation—

To the
Honour and Glory of the most
Holy VIRGIN MARY;
For her Benefit,
and for the propagation of her worship,
The Company of Comedians
will this day give a representation of
the Comic Piece, called

NANINE.

The celebrated Italian will also dance
The FANDANGO,
and the Theatre will be superbly
illuminated.

The following whimsical circumstance once happened to Mr. Lewis, previous to the performance of the Earl of Essex.

"The puff contained the Earl's recent amours with the haughty Princess; his private marriage with the lady Rutland; the envy, jealousy, and cruelty of the lady Nottingham, who, in revenge for slighted love, concealed a ring that proved fatal to the innocent Earl; the unparalleled friendship of Essex and Southampton, with the beheading of the much injured Earl." As this puff comprized such a statement of circumstances, great mischief had nearly been the consequence, from this hotch-potch of false facts and perverted history.

One of the wiseacres of the town came to the landlord of Lewis with one of these puffing bills, which not being

able to peruse himself, he requested Mr. Lewis would read it for him. When the detail was finished, he began to name the characters. "The part of the Earl of Essex to be performed by Mr. Lewis."

"Hold, hold!" said the landlord, "is Mr. Lewis to be beheaded?"

"You see he is," answered Mr. Wiseacre.

"I'll be d—d if he shall," exclaimed the landlord, "let me alone, I'll take care of that."

The horror which had seized the whole faculties of the poor simple landlord, at hearing his harmless tenant was to lose his head, was soon succeeded by a storm of rage and indignation.

"Behead him!" cried he, "I'll be d—d if they shall! And pray who will they get to do this bloody work for them?"

"The lame stage-keeper," the other answered, "who else do you think?"

"He! a blackguard, a rascal!" the host rejoined—"I always thought he had the marks of murder in his very looks?—He belonged to the soldiers in Flanders."

"Aye! so he says," replied Wiseacre. "He was beside at a slaughter-house in Cork, where he enlisted! Aye, now 'tis plain what they hired him for, the cruel, blood-thirsty vagabonds!"

"But I'll put a stop to this," said the host. "'Tis a pity I can't leave the house now, and Mr. and Mrs. Lewis are now at the rehearsal, as they call it; however, let me alone, I'll manage it so as to get him off, I warrant you."

The landlady returning from market, the indignant husband slipped out to beg a proper guard and protection for his favourite tenant.

The magistrate hearing the doleful complaint and earnest request, saw already the mistake of the unhappy landlord, and, therefore, dismissed him with words of fair comfort and encouragement, such as a solemn promise of protection long before the dreadful act could be perpetrated.

During the absence of honest Stingo Mr. Lewis returned home from the rehearsal, and to the astonishment of the much affected landlord, made a hearty dinner. His host was shocked at his calm intrepidity; and when Lewis withdrew to his apartments, to supply himself with some requisites for the performance, the landlord followed him. After many hem's and ha's, he asked him, if he really was going to the play-house that night?

"By all means, sir," said Lewis—"Why do you ask me?"

"And will you do the part of the Earl of Essex?" continued the anxious and inquisitive landlord.

"Most certainly I will, please God!" answered the performer.

"You will!" said the host. "But what if I won't let you go?"

"Won't let me!" asked Lewis, with no little surprize: "Do I owe you any thing for which you can detain me from my business?"

"Owe me!" replied the friendly landlord—"No! God love you—you owe me nothing but good will, I hope."

"Well, then, explain yourself," desired the impatient Lewis.

"You are resolved to play the Earl of Essex this night?" the host asked.

"I am," Lewis answered.

"And are you not to be beheaded?" asked the landlord; "that is, I suppose, have your head cut off?" The

poor man delivered these words with such a tremulous voice and faultering accent, that Lewis could no longer mistake him. He saw the joke, and was determined to humour it.

"My head cut off!" said Lewis—"It cannot be avoided, my dear friend. No—know that one or other of us are obliged frequently to submit to be a voluntary sacrifice for the benefit of the rest of our community; and, unfortunately for me, it happens that I must be the victim to-night. You, however, perceive, I submit with cheerfulness."

"Aye, to my sorrow I see it," answered the compassionating landlord—"I would never have believed it, had I not seen it, that you could be so hard-hearted as to go headlong to the devil in a stage play, and leave your poor wife and your pretty little boy,

for the sake of a set of raggamuffins, not worth powder and shot. You shan't, Mr. Lewis, before God, you shan't go!"

"My worthy friend," replied Lewis, "I feel your goodness in every vein of my grateful heart; but there is an indispensable necessity for my sacrifice, I must suffer it. Pray for me, dear landlord, and be assured, that in my last moments, I will so remember your kindness, as to recommend you with my dying words upon the scaffold, to him that can only reward your goodness."

"O my dear friend!" exclaimed the host, "I can't part with you so."

"We must part, my worthy landlord," answered Lewis. "I have business that would employ an age, and have but five hours to do it in.—Farewell! give me your hand!"

"Stop!" cried the landlord in an agony of real grief, "my heart's so full, I must weep. But stop a little, I say—"

Here his tender-hearted host turned away; but he stopt at the first flight of stairs to wipe the bursting tear from his honest countenance.

Lewis, creeping out of his room to listen, heard him muttering to himself—

"I'll be d——d if you die this night, die when you will; a pack of thieves, savage murderers! An honest man, worth ten cartloads of such fellows, must have his head cut off to put bread into the mouths of such strolling vagrants as you, indeed. It won't do! It won't do, I tell you."

By this time he was beyond the hearing of Mr. Lewes, who, with his accustomed tenderness, sympathized

with the distress of this worthy character. But he still was resolved not to undeceive him until he was going to the play-house. By the time he had placed every thing in order in his dressing box, the good and generous host returned, with a full pot of beer, and with a woe-begone countenance, faultering voice, and out-stretched hand; —"Well, Mr. Lewis, since you will go of your own accord to die a shameful death, let us drink a parting cup together.—Here's *long life* and good *health* to you."

Lewis returned him very gravely his hearty thanks. Here the child came into the room, the present hero of Covent-Garden theatre.

Lewis was now alarmed lest the boy should hear all the sport he had promised himself. He, therefore, interrupted their discourse, by informing the land-

lord, that his idea that beheading was a shameful death, was wrong; for that it was the most honourable of all deaths, except that of dying with a brace of bullets, the thrust of a halbert or a bayonet, in a glorious field of battle.

"I am heartily concerned," said Mr. Lewis, "to see you so afflicted for one with whom you are so slightly acquainted. You are a worthy good subject and a Christian; and it is really an honour to have the friendship of a man possessed, like you, of so many inestimable virtues."

"Aye, you don't know all yet, my friend," said the landlord, with symptoms of inward triumph, "come—sup it off! there's not much of it; for my part I have supped nothing but sorrow ever since I heard of your approaching execution."

The good host having a part to play which he carefully concealed from Lewis, he withdrew, with a much more placid countenance than he had worn ever since the morning. As the time of the performance was drawing near, he sent his waiter for the mayor's two serjeants, and parish constable, with a message, to desire they would speedily repair to his house, as a circumstance of life and death required their immediate attendance.

The tremendous summons brought them instantly, when the host set before them a half gallon pot of the best home-brewed in his cellar. He had placed the men so advantageously, that it was impossible the suspected victim could escape their vigilance. The officers of justice being at a loss to know the cause of their dreadful summons,

inquired of each other for a developement of this alarming business, which was yet unknown to all except the sagacious landlord, who meant to surprise them with a capital stroke of profound policy. His face wore unusual traits of sapience which, assisted by nods, winks, smiles, and other significant gestures, promised the production of something very extraordinary.

The *parturiunt montes, nascitur ridiculus mus* of Horace, was never more verified than in the catastrophe. Mr. Lewis descended to the passage entry; the landlord gave the signal by stamping with his foot, and cried out to his astonished myrmidons—

"Seize him, seize him! that's your man!" The police officers instantly obeyed.

"Bring him in gently," said the

landlord, " and make him sit down; I won't have him used roughly—he never deserved it at my hands."

" But, pray," asked the constable, " what's his crime? With what misdemeanor do you charge him?"

" Aye, pray, landlord," demanded Lewis, " what have I done, that by your directions I am now suffering this detention?"

" You have done nothing to me," answered the host, " nor I to you, except taking this method of saving you from being murdered by a set of cannibal vagabonds."

" What is all this about?" said the constable, " I am lost in a fog here. Pray, Mr. Lewis, explain this dark business, if you can. This chuckle-headed landlord of yours sent his stupid boy to us, desiring our immediate attendance on a matter of life and death.

When we came we found every thing quiet in the house. We inquired of Mr. Solomon the Second there, what was his business with us, but we could get nothing out of him, except that there was mischief brewing, and we should see all by and bye; "and when I stamp my foot," continued the numscull, "do you seize the man that comes down those stairs facing you;" and who was it but you? and now, he says he has nothing to allege against you, forsooth. Was there ever such a ——."

"Why, Mr. Constable," said Mr. Lewis, "although this affair has, I confess, a little disconcerted me, yet I cannot be seriously angry with him. His innocent, but friendly anxiety to preserve me, has solely brought me into this ridiculous situation. I acknowledge myself partly to blame for sporting, as I did, so long with his credulity;

and, I must confess, I deserve much more than I have suffered, for my wanton cruelty, and for which I beg his and your pardon. But the part I have acted in this curious and whimsical interlude, shall be the last of the kind I will ever perform." He then recounted every circumstance as before related, bowed, and retired, leaving the host of the Golden Ball, a subject for the pleasantry of innocent jest and jocularity.

MR. THOMAS SHERIDAN.

During the management of Mr. Thomas Sheridan, which he conducted with honour to himself, and great credit to his performers, the sinking state of the stage was suddenly snatched from impending ruin. He raised the salary of all those worthy of encouragement of the old school, as a reward for not abandoning their former manager, Tom

Phillips, who was Garrick's director in 1742.

Mr. Sheridan sparing neither expence nor trouble to entertain the public, was recompensed with the most uncommon encouragement. In this full tide of popular favour, he continued until the beginning of the year 1754. At that time the following circumstance happened.

In the first scene of Mahomet, Mr. Digges spoke with such energy a speech fraught with execrations against all betrayers of their country's liberties, either for a grasp of ore, or paltry office, that the house not only rang with applause, but also desired it might be encored. This unexpected shout brought Mr. Sheridan from his room, at the moment Digges was preparing to comply with the request of the audience. The manager immedi-

itely threatened him with the forfeiture of a month's salary, if he so far disobeyed his orders as to repeat the speech. Digges, knowing that the forfeit would amount to twenty-four pounds, was irresolute. He knew not how to act, for he equally dreaded the resentment of the audience, while they cried, "Go on, Digges—go on!" He stood bowing, and looking askew at his enraged manager, who with uplifted fist, and a violent stamp of the foot, menaced an exemplary punishment, if he had the temerity to obey a factious multitude, contrary to his positive commands.

Some gentlemen collegians, who were in the pit, and Mr. Sheridan's very good friends, overheard his threats, and the general cry was, now, *Bella, horrida Bella!* A burning can-

dle from one of the sconces hurled upon the stage, was the signal for a general attack. This was commenced by a heavy shower of potatoes from the upper gallery, while some of the more active and dauntless bucks leaped over the *cheveaux-de-frize* which separated the stage from the orchestra, and made such rapid devastation, as caused the manager to flee in order to prevent his falling the victim of their boundless fury. He was sought through every part of the house. Their search proving in vain, they directed their vengeance against scenes, looking glasses, chairs, and every other valuable in the new decked wardrobe. Thus did this moral, honest man, bring destruction on his property from fearing the frowns of Lord George Sackville, the secretary to his father, then Lord Lieutenant. Rather than risk his

displeasure, he defied the resentment of the public, from whom he was receiving the most essential support and distinguished patronage. With this sentiment he met his ruin; and with a young growing family unprovided for, he abandoned his native country, without a ray of hope that he should retrieve the losses he had now sustained.

But this supererogatory instance of his zeal for the court party, at that time, did not meet with the reward it deserved; for so far from receiving any gratuity for the mighty favour he fondly supposed he had done to the government, his memorial, wherein his melancholy circumstances were fully exhibited to the chief governor and council, was laid aside: and notwithstanding many solicitations of himself and a numerous party of re-

spectable friends, who warmly interested themselves in his behalf, every application for an indemnification of his loss proved abortive.

" Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,
" Must ship thee hence—therefore prepare;
" The barque is ready, and the wind sets fair
" For England."——

And to England, that excellent representative of the Danish prince was compelled to come, which made a horrid chasm and a perilous gash in the stage affairs in Dublin.

The deplorable condition to which the theatre of Smock-alley was thus reduced, deterred adventurers from venturing on board this wreck of a playhouse.

Benjamin Victor, Esq. poet laureat for Ireland, was in the house on the above destructive evening, but was too incon-

siderable as an individual, to prevent the mischief he could not avoid lamenting.

Mr. Sowden, a performer under the late manager, Sheridan, possessing some money, ventured to refit the theatre with all possible haste, and retain as many of the deserted performers as remained in the kingdom. Some of the remainder went to England, and others to Scotland: among the latter was Mr. Laurence Kennedy, whose wife was the younger sister of Mr. Younger, and was, without exception, the best comic actress that the Irish theatre ever produced. She remained in Dublin to send her husband certain intelligence of what might happen, for or against his return, in the circumstances of the rising theatre.

I here take the liberty to relate an anecdote of Thomas Sheridan, master of arts; and who was, at the time the affair happened which I am about to tell my reader, manager of the Theatre Royal in Smock-alley, Dublin.

At a trial in the Court of Exchequer in that city, of a cause wherein Mr. Sheridan had a friend principally concerned, Mr. Sheridan's evidence was of the utmost consequence to his friend. He accordingly appeared in court. The leading counsel for his friend most ably supported his cause, and to corroborate his arguments the more forcibly, he frequently urged the evidence of so very respectable a gentleman as Mr. Sheridan, who came there to support his client's cause. There was not a single doubt entertained in the whole court of the integrity of Mr. Sheridan;

even from the Chief Baron to the attorney's clerk, all were convinced he was not prejudiced dishonourably in behalf of his friend. But the barrister who was employed upon the other side, laying hold of his learned brother's repeatedly terming Mr. Sheridan a *gentleman*, commenced his harangue with one of those illiberal, because general reflections, which his learning, and in every other respect gentlemanly manners, should have taught him to avoid, and more particularly so pointedly to apply to Mr. Sheridan. "My Lord," said he, "I am afraid we shall be shortly at a loss to know who to distinguish by the respectable appellation of gentleman.—Why, gentleman, instead of being reputed honourable among us, will be meant by those who choose to reproach

and insult us, but as a cant phrase, to procure to us the scorn of the vulgar, to bring us real gentlemen to a level with the lawless mob.

" My learned brother calls a stage-player, an actor in Tragedies and Comedies, a *gentleman!* Tell it not in Gath—let it not be heard in the streets of Ascalon, that a common player should, in a high court of justice, be termed a gentleman! I have heard, indeed, of gentlemen soldiers, gentlemen sailors, and of gentlemen taylors! but I must confess, I never before now heard of, or saw, a *gentleman player.*"

On this occasion Mr. Sheridan never acted a part better in his life; for, as Lord Mansfield observed to Mr. Macklin, when he had prudently compromised matters with some gentleman who had injured him highly, " that he

never saw him so much in character before," or words to that effect; so Sheridan repressed his indignation, and instantaneously turned to the calumniator of his profession, with a placid smile on his countenance, and his hand laid gracefully on his bosom, "I hope, sir, you see one now." This was accompanied with a very low bow.

The learned gentleman, on hearing the general plaudit given to the discreet Sheridan, shrunk abashed, and sat down upon the seat which he had that day disgraced by an insult on the feelings of a man, justly esteemed as accomplished a gentleman, as Ireland, the land of gentlemen, could boast.

MRS. KENNEDY.

I have already informed my readers, that Mrs. Kennedy remained in Dublin, to give her husband intelligence of the new direction; and was, soon after the departure of Mr. Sheridan, engaged on a salary of four pounds per week. Her husband was then playing with Mr. Garrick's counterpart, Mr. John Lee, at Edinburgh. Conjugal love and paternal affection, with almost a certainty of a very good engagement, powerfully stimulated him to return home to his wife and family. He arrived in Dublin in 1755, after about a year's absence. Mrs. Kennedy was re-engaged at her former salary, but without being able to obtain any provision for her husband. She expostulated with the managers on the cruelty of separating man and wife, and did not fail to remind

them, that in Mr. Sheridan's management, her husband had, for the last three years, three pounds a week, and for which he had done a great deal of business. They would not give any such salary; but, to oblige her, they offered to allow him thirty shillings a week, which, they said, was as much as they could possibly afford him; the repairs of the theatre, and the expectation of the public of new scenes and more splendid decorations under the new managers, having exhausted their narrow finances.

Mrs. Kennedy, thus repulsed, went home, and acquainted her husband of what had happened, who, being rather warm in his temper, was unusually filled with resentment. He resolved, that nothing but one or both of the offenders' lives, or the loss of his own, should appease his wrath, or satisfy his

wounded honour. Thus determined, he issued forth—went to a friend's house, borrowed a case of pistols, which he loaded with ball upon the spot.—Thus armed, he instantly went to the lodgings of Sowden, who was acting-manager, as well as the most formidable of his opponents. Being shewn into a room where Sowden was opportunely alone, he pulled out his pistols, laid them on the table before him, and desired he would take his choice; for his cruel refusal of his usual salary being the cause of his present rashness, it was indifferent to him whether he survived it or not.

Sowden was so planet-struck, that, for some time, he could not articulate a single syllable. But when his utterance returned, he addressed the bold Larry in the following manner—

"You have, my dear Mr. Kennedy,

mistaken your man. I am not the person that opposes your wishes. Upon my honour, it is Mr. Victor you should invite to this coarse entertainment."

"Come, sir, no evasion—you see I'm resolved."

"Dear sir," replied Sowden, with the utmost trepidation, "my partner is the sole cause of your uneasiness. Believe me, he is."

"Is he?" said Kennedy, "why then you're safe for a while. I'll go directly to him, and if he acknowledges the fault, you may live secure. But, at your peril, do not stir till I return, which, if I'm alive, shall be very soon."

He hastened instantly to Victor's house, and had no sooner entered than he thus accosted him.

"Mr. Victor, you are a gentleman by birth and education, and are esteemed by the first personages in this king-

dom, which makes me believe, you would not be the sole oppressor of a man from whom you had never received, or had cause to apprehend, the least injury. I trust, therefore, you can exculpate yourself from the charge I bring against you. Don't be alarmed, sir; no innocent man need be afraid of me. My charge against you is this—You are resolved to keep me out of bread in my native city. The late unhappy tumult which drove me from Ireland, has now happily subsided—and now, on my return, I am informed, that you, and your coadjutor, have resolved to give me but half a loaf. That will not do, Mr. Victor; so, [*drawing out his pistols*] either let me enjoy my late salary, or take one of these, and entirely deprive a man of life, who, from an unlucky habit, perhaps, cannot live without his full allowance."

"You astonish me, Mr. Kennedy—indeed you do," replied Victor. "Have you no respect for the laws of your country thus to ———?"

"Sir, sir, no more words—you have driven me to desperation; a man does not fear hanging who is in danger of starving. I am an Irishman, sir, so let me eat, or take the consequences."

"But how am I the man," asked Victor, "that keeps you out of bread? Who has been so uncharitable, and has so mistaken my character, as to advance so great a falsehood?"

"Then you are not the cause?" said Kennedy.

"No, upon my honour," replied Victor. "Who told you I was?"

"Mr. Sowden," Kennedy answered.

"He!" said Victor. "He wrongs me, upon my honour."

"To prove your innocence clearly," said Larry, "let Mr. Sowden be sent for immediately. I will suffer no private hints to be given to the messenger, by which he may gather the nature of our present perilous situation." This was exactly complied with.

Mr. Sowden being announced, was desired to enter by bold Larry, who, during the absence of the servant, stood with his back to the room door with a pistol in each hand. The tremendous aspect of Kennedy thus armed, filled poor Sowden with new terrors. Mr. Victor, more collected, asked him how he could be so unjust as to lay the whole blame of this business upon him.

"Who?" said the terrified Sowden.

"Yes, you," answered the resolute Kennedy. "But come to the point at once."

"For heaven sake, don't be so rash,"

said the mild Mr. Victor. "I must confess we were to blame. Your plea of being a native of this opulent and magnificent city is greatly in your favour; for my part, I agree to the terms of your former engagement. You are a very useful man, and was always ready and willing to perform any part rather than let the stage stand, as we say."

"I think as you do, Mr. Victor," said Sowden; "and the sooner we finish this business, the better. I have some blank articles about me; here, Mr. Kennedy, fill 'em up immediately. God forbid I should be the means of banishing you from your family and country!" The articles being signed and witnessed, for three pounds per week, they shook hands, when bold Larry went home triumphantly, and

informed his unsuspecting wife of what he had effected.

The affair being trusted to a woman was soon published, and Kennedy thus obtained the name of the Bold Larry, from that day of resolute enterprize until that of his death. I cannot prevent the lapse of a tear while recording his intrepidity; I recollect his tragical end.

MR. GARRICK'S MARRIAGE, &c.

It is rather singular that Mr. Garrick's numerous biographers should have entirely omitted not the least of the interesting particulars of his marriage with Signora Violetti; particularly as they have thought proper to trouble the world with the most circumstantial and minute account of his foibles, peculiarities, and eccentricities.

Mr. Davis, in his Memoirs of Garrick, has been rather too brief in relating that important event, in the life of that eminent performer: whether Mr. Davis knew the circumstances which caused the union of the happy pair, or whether he chose for private reasons to suppress their relation, I will not presume to determine.

It is as singular that Mr. Murphy should have omitted this interesting circumstance, merely glancing at his marriage with the fair Violetti.

Mr. Wilkinson of the theatre-royal, York, has likewise favoured us, in his own eventful history, with a great variety of matter relative to the deceased Roscius. I therefore consider myself fortunate in having it in my power to give a circumstantial and authentic account of his courtship and marriage, as I received it from an aged domestic,

who lived at the time it happened, at Burlington-House, Piccadilly.

The late Earl of Cork and Burlington, that distinguished patron of the fine arts, had, during his tour through Italy, an amour with a young lady of family, in the city of Florence. Their intimacy produced, at a naturally expected period, a sweet pledge of their endearments. His lordship was unfortunately called home before he could have the pleasure of beholding the dear offspring of his tender attachment; and the mother, although she was abandoned by her relatives for the disgrace she had brought upon her family, sought, in her infant, the only comfort she could find for the absence of its beloved father. Family considerations obliged him, soon after his return from Italy, to form a matrimonial connection with a native of his own country.

But this union of family prudence and accommodation, could not obliterate his fond remembrance of his former love, nor the affection which he felt as a parent. In a word, he deserted neither the Italian lady nor his child: he sent ample remittances to her, and actually corresponded with her by letters, and several trusty messengers, whom he employed for the purpose of hearing faithfully the state of the mother and her infant, who he had every reason to believe was his own. The lovely girl received from her well-bred mother a virtuous, and an accomplished education. She was the delight of her parents; and the great advances she made in every branch of politeness and elegance, rendered her capable of adorning the most exalted spheres of life. Unfortunately, before she arrived

at womanhood she lost her mother, whom she had the affliction to see gradually falling the victim of a cause too latent for her to discover; and as her mother never gave her the least personal knowledge of her real father, she thus found herself, at a very early period of life, in the situation of an orphan, without a parent to guide, protect, or cherish that period of female life, when all around is danger and delusion. She had, however, the satisfaction of learning from her mother, that her father was of a family both honourable and noble. His lordship having early intelligence of the death of the amiable woman, immediately formed a plan for completing the education of his daughter, which the mother had, with his liberal and powerful assistance, considerably advanced towards a state of singular perfection. To effect this

desirable purpose, he wrote to a person at Florence, in whom he had great confidence, to take instantly charge of the young creature. This person, however, proved so unfaithful, as to appropriate the greater part of the allowance that should have supported and educated the absent daughter with every splendour and accommodation becoming her descent. She was even thankful to him for an engagement he obtained for her as a dancer in the opera-house of the Great Duke; so much was she deceived by the pretences and representations of this perfidious monster, that she even received the most trifling allowance as the gratuity of his own beneficence. Her appointment as a dancer soon reaching the ears of her noble father and protector, made him resolve that she should no longer continue at such a distance from his care

and observance. Being arrived at the most precarious time of life, and her situation being, in every respect, truly hazardous, still more determined him to dispatch a messenger for her, who engaged her to come to England, at a much greater salary than she could ever possibly expect to have in Italy. The offer was irresistible, and either a presentiment of what followed, or a desire to visit other climes, induced her to take the earliest opportunity of coming to England.

The period of the arrival of Signora Violetti was soon after Mr. Garrick (with whom she was engaged) commenced manager of Drury-lane theatre. The graces that attended her first appearance, charmed and prepossessed every spectator in her favour. "She won the hearts of all the swains, and rivalled all the fair." Modesty, like

her native handmaid, waited on all her steps; and dame Fortune, however cruel to others, lavished upon her the most desirable of her bounties.

My readers must almost anticipate my informing them, that the noble lord, her father, although under covert, was not the less zealous or inactive in establishing her reputation. He likewise embraced every opportunity of conversing with his fair offspring in her native language, in which he found her possess all the perfection his most anxious wishes could have formed. But these frequent and pleasing conversations to both were not yet sufficiently satisfactory to the parent, who was naturally impatient to have the mutual enjoyment that arises from filial and parental intercourse, uncontrouled by disguise, and unfettered by mystery. Nothing could possibly ease the solicitude

of the anxious parent but providing her an asylum under his own roof. To accomplish this desirable object, required the greatest delicacy and discretion. His lordship being blessed with a daughter* some years younger than Signora Violetti, this circumstance suggested to him the idea of having his fair exotic the tutoress of her unknown sister. Signora winning incessantly on his affections, increased his impatience to effect his purpose of having her in his family. As his daughter by his lady frequently accompanied him to the theatre, he availed himself of this circumstance, to create an esteem in her for her unknown relation, the admired dancer. Particularly specifying her graces and excellences, he soon

* She was afterwards married to the most noble Marquis of Hartington; who, on the demise of his father, came to the title and estate of Duke of Devonshire.

caused his honourable daughter to feel warmly in the interest of Signora. Finding that he had thus far succeeded in his wishes, he asked her one night as they were sitting in the stage box, if she would approve of Signora Violetti as companion and tutoress in the Italian tongue, in which he informed her that she was most eminently perfect, and that her other accomplishments were equally excellent. He was happy to find his ardent wishes almost anticipated, by the ready and pleased compliance of the young lady. Signora was, therefore, conveyed the same night in his lordship's carriage, to the town mansion in Piccadilly.

This fair and amiable *stranger at home* found her accommodations in that abode of hospitality, in every respect equal, and even surpassing the most sanguine wishes of her heart. And

she felt herself for the first time in a state of happiness, in which nature had more concern than reason at present could explain. But as the tenor of human comfort was not meant to consist in a continuity of satisfaction, her's was soon interrupted by him who wounds every breast, either to fill it often with the balm of enjoyment, or the bitterness of affliction. Love sat heavy on her breast, and pallid on her cheek. Her charms withered, and her health decayed; until nature, exhausted, obliged her to recline on the couch of sickness. Here, to the great alarm and concern of her unknown relations, she languished a considerable time. Her amiable pupil was uncommonly concerned; perhaps the ties of nature latently increased the affliction: the ablest physicians were obtained for her relief; but notwithstanding all the care,

bility, and tenderness, that were employed for her recovery, the violence of her indisposition frustrated every endeavour. Her own delicacy would not permit her to divulge the secret cause of her malady. Although it threatened her with almost an instantaneous dissolution, yet the hopes of a cure could not induce her to acknowledge herself the victim of affection.—His lordship felt the bitter pangs of a loving parent, distressed by the visible decline of an amiable daughter. He saw, with extreme distress, the tender plant that he was with so much care and anxiety fostering, wither beneath the cold hand of an invisible disease. His lady was, likewise, greatly affected; and sympathized with her noble partner, for the loss they were all likely to sustain. Her ladyship, however, not despairing of a remedy being found,

took the most prudential and effectual method, by delicately searching the tender heart of the afflicted fair one. Doctor Mead, the Esculapius of his day, pronouncing her disorder beyond his power, or even that of medicine, to remove, prompted the good lady to divine the cause. She was convinced that *love* alone was the disturber of her mind, and the destroyer of her frame. Assured of this, her ladyship made her fair guest a visit, resolving, if possible, to discover the latent cause of her indisposition. For this purpose, she, with great address, asked her where she felt the most pain? and in what manner particularly she was affected? Not receiving to these questions, and some others of a similar nature, the most explicit answers, her first suspicions were still stronger confirmed. With all the tender delicacy, therefore, which dis-

tinguished her amiable character, she seized her hand with benign sympathy, and declared she was most extremely happy to have discovered, that the cause of her malady was not incurable. "The cause is love," said she, "and for which I think a certain cure may be found." The change she perceived this observation made in her fair patient, confirmed its propriety. She then entreated the indisposed damsel to own to her, who was the object of her affection; and promised, upon her honour, not to betray her confidence. She farther prevailed, by assuring her that she would, were it possible, obtain for her the object of her languishing desires. "I have so great an opinion of your discretion, my dear Signora," continued the worthy lady, "that you could not possibly fix your affections on an improper object, that I am the

more impatient to know who he is, that I may the sooner find the means of restoring you to your wonted charms, health, and happiness. My Lord is deeply afflicted in consequence of your indisposition. He is, indeed, much more distressed than I could have thought he could, with all his tenderness of nature, have been for any stranger to his blood, even as amiable as you are, my dear Signora."

"O, my dear madam!" said the much to be pitied young lady, "Spare me, spare me! I dare not confess my weakness, even to you—all-gracious as you have been to your orphan charge. And I cannot express the remorse I feel at my being obliged to behave with ingratitude to your dear Lord, by concealing from him as well as from you, two such generous benefactors,

what preys upon my existence, and must finally bear me to my grave."

"My dear Signora," replied the lady, "'tis now in your power to acquit yourself of all conceived obligation to both him and me, by so far convincing us we deserve your confidence, as to trust us with the important secret. We would wish to have this assurance of your reposing in our zealous efforts being exerted in your welfare. It is no idle curiosity that urges my intreaty, but an indescribable interest I feel in your favour. Should there be found, upon enquiry, any insuperable bar to an honourable union, that can alone restore you to your former peace of mind: the secret shall ever remain undiscovered to the impertinence of enquiry, or the censure of malignity."

The above candid, sincere, and in-

teresting declaration of the good lady was too prevailing. It won at once the confidence and heartfelt gratitude of the afflicted fair one. She confessed, "That Mr. GARRICK was the object of her esteem; but that he was as yet entirely ignorant of being the cause of what she had so severely felt from her tender attachment."

The amiable lady, with the greatest concern, heard this confession, and told her with symptoms of apprehension, that she feared the possibility of her desires ever being gratified by the attainment of their object: that Mr. Garrick was a young fellow universally caressed by families of the first distinction, and one who had been already suspected of aspiring to rank and fortune in a matrimonial alliance. She represented likewise to her languishing

patient many other difficulties; but, finding they had visibly affected the tender state of the now all-desponding fair, she assured her that no means should be left untried. She begged that neither languor nor hopeless grief should be suffered to prey any longer on her almost exhausted frame. "Confide," said she, "in my lord's good offices, and be assured of our best efforts being exerted to obtain you consolation and relief."

His lordship was rejoiced that his lady had obtained the secret cause of his beloved (although unavowed) daughter's indisposition: in proportion to its concealment having caused him the greatest uneasiness, its discovery afforded him pleasure. Being possessed of the truth, his hopes of his child's speedy recovery began to revive. Knowing

Garrick's love for money was the ray of his expectation, and the guide of his measures, Mr. Garrick was instantly sent for to his house. He had no sooner arrived, and enquired after the health of Signora, than his lordship opened the negociation of Hymen, by informing him with a smile, "that the lady's indisposition was not to be removed by any other than one Doctor Garrick, an intimate acquaintance of his."

"Pray, my dear lord," said the astonished manager, "explain yourself."

"Well, sir," answered his lordship, "should you find, upon the strictest enquiry, that Signora Violette is a lady of family and *fortune*, and possessed of every virtue indispensable to the honour of the female character, do you think you could satisfactorily receive her from my hands, with a portion of

ten * thousand pounds? And here let me inform you that she is *my daughter.*"

The enraptured Garrick gave his lordship ten thousand thanks for the unmerited honour and fortune to which he so unexpectedly, but generously, invited him. He at the same time declared, with all due decorum, "that the lady was, from the first moment of his acquaintance with her, far from being indifferent to either his views or his wishes; and that he had ever felt more than a common interest in her favour."

"You add to my satisfaction, and relieve the parental apprehensions I felt for the recovery of my daughter," replied his lordship. "Until the cause of her complaint was discovered, the fear

* Mr. Murphy mentions the sum to have been *six* thousand pounds.

of losing my child was my incessant affliction. And, now Doctor, if you please, I will conduct you to your patient. My lady will, I know, accompany us."

When Mr. Garrick entered the chamber, he flew to the bed-side of his enamoured fair, and acted his part with as much grace, and perhaps more nature, than he had ever performed it on the stage. His lordship then pleasantly informed her, that her Doctor had been in danger of the same disorder, and from the same cause—an obstinate and unnecessary silence. From this auspicious hour, the God of Health re-bloomed her cheek, and re-illumined her eye. And the English Roscius continued unremitting in his attendance on the young lady, whose cure was speedily effected, to the great joy of the noble family.

The nuptials being celebrated, Mr. Edward Moore, the ingenious city poet, inscribed a very pretty copy of verses to Mrs. Garrick, wherein he describes Fortune in search of a favourite daughter. After many a weary step, she stopt her giddy wheel at Burlington gate, where she found the object of her enquiry, and lavished on her the choicest of her favours.

GARRICK'S ANTIPATHY TO BARRY.

This circumstance having occasioned many remarks, and much observation in the sphere of theatricals, the assignment of its real cause may prove acceptable, from its tendency to elucidate what has yet been too unknown for all preceding attempts of explanation.

Mr. Garrick was married in 1749. In March, 1750, his late Majesty ho-

noured Barry so highly, as to command the play on the night of his benefit. Garrick felt a considerable mortification at this royal countenance of a performer, who exerted all his talents and industry to rival him in dramatic fame.

And, indeed, like every great character, who aspires to the summit of excellence, and is ambitious to stand unrivalled in popular favour, he conceived an inveterate prejudice against this distinguished performer. Such were his apprehensions of Barry's talents, that he has been frequently heard to wish he (Barry) had never been born. So alarmed was he at the popularity of this great actor, that it encreased to a species of envy, productive of an antipathy, that was only terminated by the life of Barry.

Sir John Hill, in the Inspector, relates a Green-room quarrel, in which Mrs. Clive and Mrs. Woffington were principals. Garrick espoused the conduct of Mrs. Woffington, and Barry that of Mrs. Clive. Scratched faces were the consequences, and Clive was the conqueror. And as many believed Garrick's antipathy to Barry arose from this dispute, it is here just mentioned as an erroneous explication.

The author is informed, from indisputable authority, of circumstances that will incontestably prove the source of the difference subsisting between the Ajax and Hector of the Drama. A few weeks after the nuptial ceremony, Mrs. Garrick was insulted by the presentation of the following letter; the copy of which is substantially as follows.

"MADAM,

"Impelled by my love, I can no longer conceal the passion which your beauty has inspired. In vain does my reason suggest that you already belong to another, when the same reason whispers, that he is unworthy of you. Yes, madam, he has received your hand, not from choice, but prudence. He is a wretch as incapable of love as of generosity—a pitiful little animal, who has no other passion but avarice, and no other mistress but a Guinea. Your answer will reach me in safety, if addressed as follows—

— —— —— — —— ——."

With that abhorrence natural to purity of manners, chastity of disposition, and dignity of sentiment, Mrs.

Garrick communicated instantly this attack upon her honour and character, to her husband. The eager curiosity of Garrick was immediately excited, for the purpose of discovering the writer. Every means were employed, and so successfully, as to trace the clue so far, as to give him all possible reason to suppose the whole originated and commenced with Barry. But not being able entirely to prove him the author, he could never directly charge him with the fact. So forcibly however was he convinced of Barry's being the lover, that he ever after conceived against him a most inveterate hatred. And as one effect of his antipathy, the following Epigram appeared, on Barry joining Mr. Rich, at the close of the season, 1750.

EPIGRAM

ON BARRY JOINING MR. RICH.

One great Goliah Gath could boast,
Of Philistines of yore;
But Covent Garden's threat'ning host
Boasts one Goliah more:—
Yet, fear not ye of Drury Lane,
By little champion led;
Their two Goliahs roam in vain,
While David's at your head.

I shall here take an opportunity of recording another marked instance of Mr. Garrick's jealousy, with regard to the dramatic merits of every performer who had any chance of rivalling him in the public estimation. It will put his disposition with respect to that failing in a characteristic point of view.

Mr. Mossop, conceiving himself but lightly treated by Mr. Garrick, though in high estimation with the public, was resolved to pay a visit to Dublin, from whence he had been absent some years. But being too haughty in his disposition to condescend to make known, in a direct manner, his intention, he communicated it to one, who, he was certain, would convey immediate notice to the Irish managers. The news of which instantaneously operated like a stroke of electricity on the sensible nerves of the Dublin directors, who immediately sent over proposals to Mossop, such as he could not with prudence refuse. He accordingly concluded an engagement with them, and embarked for Ireland immediately.

The great, and deserved applause,

which this gentleman had received, from the most critical and candid audience in the world, (a London theatre), was no slender recommendation to him in his native capital. But a few years before he had made his *début* on the very stage where he was now to perform, and

"Reach'd perfection in his first essay."

I must premise, that Mr. Mossop originally performed the part of Barbarossa, and was, perhaps, the only performer that ever made that blustering character truly respectable. At this juncture he took upon himself to cast that play, allotting to himself Achmet, wherein Mr. Garrick shone with a distinguished lustre. And it is allowed by the most candid and impartial judges in Dublin, to this day, that Mossop fell

nothing short of the English Roscius in any of the scenes throughout the whole part, excepting two; the one with his mother, Zaphira, and that with Irene, the tyrant Barbarossa's daughter. The tenderness required in these scenes sat rather aukward and distressing on him, as they evidently cramped, or put a curb on the natural exertions of those strong powers of voice, which he possessed to an unrivalled degree; but where such powers were necessary, he acted so as to bid loud defiance to competition.

It is reported, that Mr. Garrick, when he saw Mr. Mossop's name in the Dublin papers set down for the part of Achmet, expressed a wish for his success—with what sincerity we are not competent to judge; but, if we may guess, Garrick certainly was far

from being in earnest.——When he was informed, by several Hibernian critics, of the rapturous applause his rival had received in that character in particular, he was remarked to grow suddenly peevish to his most confidential friends belonging to the theatre. So far did his peevish humour carry him on the occasion, that Mossop's great merit being the topic of conversation one morning in the Green-room, even in the presence of Doctor Brown, the avowed author of Barbarossa—"He wished," he said, "that gentlemen would pay more attention to their duty to the public, than by their ill-timed discourses, during rehearsals, obstruct the essential business of the stage. If Mr. Mossop, gentlemen, whom some of you take so much pains to extol, and magnify his great deservings,"

continued he, "has become so much the god of your idolatry, I would advise you to exert yourselves to emulate the perfections of that great man, and try all in your power to even excel him, as the task is not impossible, nor even improbable to arrive at, among so many geniuses, possessed of so much critical knowledge, as many of you *seem* to have to an exalted degree."

The severity which this cool advice carried with it, served to silence for the present all the parties who heard it. But it also developed, and clearly shewed them, that any praise being given, however just, to any other performer, in Mr. Garrick's hearing, provoked him to an unpardonable jealousy. Unpardonable I must call it, as his deserved reputation was fully established,

not only in the British dominions, but in every polite country in Europe.

There was an old snarling cynic of the name of Taswell, at this time, who was a performer in Drury-lane Theatre, and held in high estimation by Mr. Garrick for his classical knowledge.—This gentleman, who had a ready wit, and was particularly famous for repartee and bitter sarcasms, consulted his own interest so well (being poor and expensive in his living), as not ever to give any offence to his techy manager. While Mossop was thundering away in Drury-lane, Mr. David Ross, then an elegant figure, and a rising favourite with the public, occupied a very extensive line of stage business at Covent Garden Theatre. Mossop, as we have hinted above, was causelessly envied by Garrick, who held Ross's merit in no great esteem.

This silly spleen of the *great little man* could not possibly escape the observation of the discerning Taswell; and he made his advantage of it, by frequently flinging out slurs and sharp invectives against the town, for favouring those two gentlemen by any means at all.

In one of those ill-natured (I was going to say ill-mannered) humours, he came into the Green-room, at a time of rehearsal, pulling up his breeches, (a common custom with him), and growling out—"Damn it, I believe my townsmen, as well as my townswomen, are all mad! Here's a piece of work, indeed!—Great actors—aye to be sure, and who but they forsooth?—Ross!—Mossop! why that's the general cry now."

"How now, what is the matter?—what has disturbed you, Mr. Taswell?" said Mr. Garrick, who beheld with a

malicious satisfaction, a fit of ill-humour rising in the old snarler: "what has so disturbed you?"

"It is enough, Master Garrick, to provoke a Socrates or a Plato, to see a whole town, famed for wit and sound judgment, now sacrificing both, in so lavishingly praising a couple of boys.—Their merit, indeed!—the one bellows out his turgid passions in unnatural rants; and the other, if he has any claim to powerful lungs, saves them, and entertains the audience with snivelling and whining, in parts which require a man's utmost exertions. But let them divide the silly, infatuated town, for me—I don't care a button—

> The templars, they cry Mossop;
> The ladies, they cry Ross up;
> But which is the best, is a toss up."

"Well hit off," said Mr. Garrick; "and I dare swear, Mr. Taswell, this

witty triplet was unpremeditated; a newly conceived impromptu, eh! Old Tas! was it so?"

"Why should *you* ask such a question, Master Garrick? I was in hopes you knew me better, than to suppose I would waste half an hour's time, in studying to animadvert upon the slender capacities of such *Automatons* as they both are in my eyes."

Nothing could have been more satisfactory to Garrick's feelings, than these frequent cynical remarks of Taswell, and he appeared always highly delighted with his splenetic critiques.

Though Mr. Garrick was confessedly unrivalled in every character he undertook to perform, he never so far forgot his duty to an indulgent public, or to himself, as to act the Grecian cobler, and go beyond his last.

I have heard an anecdote of M
Garrick, which may not unaptly be
lated here. He associated with
most distinguished men for criti
knowledge in the kingdom; and
pressed by one gentleman of the ab
description, to try his talents on
Old Knight. "He would," he sa
"ensure him success; as he had c
versed with many of his admirers,
other walks of the Drama, who
agreed with him in opinion, that
was not only equal to the difficult ta
allowing for his deficiency in point
bulk and height, but that he m
succeed in it:——Your genius
strike out in that part new beaut
as you have in many others, to
astonishment and admiration of
town."

"Sir," replied Mr. Garrick, "
very flattering picture you are pl

ed to draw of my dramatic abilities, deserves my warmest acknowledgment. I must confess, I have been frequently pressed by a great number of my partial friends to get into the *buckbasket*, or handle the sword and target of the humorous, amorous, and blustering Sir John. But, as the indulgence of the public has raised me to a state above the fear of want in this life, I trust I shall not be ever so weak and silly, as to hazard, by my rash imprudence, their good opinion of my understanding, by venturing the reputation I have acquired, by dint of application for so many years, by one night's piece of folly, in a part so much above my *compass* of voice and bodily proportion."

There spoke the man of sense: and yet it is well known to many of his

convivial friends, that, Quin excepted, no performer of his time had a juster conception, or could repeat the part of Falstaff with more propriety. But would he not hazard his well-earned fame, by pigmy-like strutting upon the stage, with stuffed doublet, and the assistance of vermilion, lake, or carmine.

There are very few instances on record of actors or actresses, that a very pathetic speech had so powerful effect upon, as to cause a flood of tears to pour down their cheeks, on the recital of. The late Mrs. Pritchard's great sensibility sometimes choaked all the fine powers of that eminent mistress in the art of acting. So it was with the late Mr. Powel. Not so was Mr. Garrick ever affected, even in parts where his manner of delivering him-

self, pardon the hyperbole, would have made even stones weep; yet were the eyes of that great master of scenic performances, dry as those of an unfeeling hypocrite.

I happened one evening, in conversation with a very intelligent friend, to ask him his opinion relative to the matter I am now treating of. I wished to know, whether there might not be some physical cause of the singular sensibility of some, and the no less extraordinary absolute apathy of others; many possessing that happy command of features, that they can look sorrow and terror, without suffering the ordinary effects, *tears*, to make their appearance? My friend expressed himself at as great a loss to account for the different effects of the passion as I did; and at the same time told

me of a more surprizing phenomenon which he had several times had an opportunity of beholding on the stage—that was of a man, of the name of Henry Dunn, who never went on in a tragic character, let the night be ever so cold, but his face was all bedewed with sweat, and the further he proceeded in the part, the more disagreeable he made it to the audience; as from every pore, in his face alone, drop succeeded drop, till sometimes the stage was perceptibly wet with his unaccountable perspiration. Strange! that a man of a thin habit of body, should be thus afflicted, I may say, with a malady of this kind. This person played with Whitely one season; and that sarcastical manager, whenever he cast Mr. Dunn a tragic part, used waggishly to say, he was giving him a sudorific: no unapt expression, you

will say. But the mischief of it was, whatever pains poor Dunn took to make him *look* his part with propriety, he was sure to have the marks of the Indian ink entirely obliterated from his countenance, by the torrents that ran down so plentifully while he was *squeezing* out his words. The tyrant, Richard the Third, was sure to lose the tip that had been made on his chin as well as his formidable whiskers; a deprivation that made him consequently appear less terrible, and that before the second act was over. The good old Lear, and Lusignan, were not less disfigured, by those powerful enemies to a clean face. Yet when this man has represented Falstaff, and many other parts, where blank verse was excluded, a drop never started from him, even at midsummer. Ye profound metaphysicians, ye learned of Warwick-lane,

with the whole body of well-informed natural philosophers—solve me this paradox!

GARRICK'S REFUSAL OF THE FIRST SALARY GIFFARD OFFERED HIM.

After having played Richard at Goodman's-fields Theatre, without any previous agreement about salary, at the end of the first week, young Giffard, from whom I had this information, suddenly went into a room, where he found his father and Garrick altercating as follows:—

"You shall." "I won't by heavens!" "Come, come, young gentleman, I insist upon it." At length, six guineas fell between on the carpet.—"Upon my honour, sir," said Garrick, "it is too much, and I positively will not take it."

The fact was, Giffard meant to pre-

sent him with the six guineas, which he had appointed as his weekly salary. During this struggle between conscious merit in the mind of Giffard, respecting Garrick, and modesty in Garrick with respect to his own deservings, young Giffard, unperceived, picked up the six guineas, decamped, and spent it.

About a month after young Giffard was witness to another altercation between them, but of a different nature. It was, "Garrick insisting, that he would not play any more, if he was not admitted to a certain portion of the profits!!!" I shall make no comment on this, farther than it confirms the general opinion of Garrick's excellence, not only as an actor, but a bargain-maker: yet, abstracted from scenic bargains, his excellence is to be questioned, I mean in the particular in-

stance of laying out that vast sum (near 1,000,000 l.) which the public had possessed him of. I have heard Mr. Murphy say, "had he a mint of money, he would not give more than 60,000 l. for what actually cost Garrick near 100,000 l."

So much has been said of this great performer, that I thought myself fortunate in the possession of the foregoing anecdotes, which I shall now close with an observation or two. Monotony was the leading feature of the old school, aided by a long stride, and a dignified motion of the head to wave the funereal plume that crowned it. To Mr. Garrick alone is the stage indebted for correcting those errors.—With him *emphasis* and *gesture* made their first appearance; he led them into the *temple* of *taste*, sanctified by *truth*.

We must say of him, as Thomas Randolph said of Thomas Riley—

" When thou art pleased to act an angry part,
" Thou fright'st the audience; and with nimble art
" Turn'd lover, thou dost that so lively too,
" Men think that Cupid taught thee how to woo.
" T' express thee all wou'd ask a better pen;
" Thou art, tho' *li tle*, the whole map of men."

I shall here subjoin an exact copy of the Play Bill which announced the first appearance of Mr. Garrick on the London stage, which will close my anecdotes of the English Roscius.

October 19th, 1741.

GOODMAN'S FIELDS.

At the late Theatre, in Goodman's-fields, this day, will be performed a Concert of Vocal and Instrumental Music, divided into Two Parts.

Tickets at three, two, and one Shilling.

Places for the Boxes to be taken at the Fleece Tavern, next the Theatre.

N. B. Between the two parts of the Concert, will be presented, an Historical Play, called,

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF

KING RICHARD THE THIRD.

Containing the distress of K. Henry VI.
The artful acquisition of the Crown, by King Richard.
The murder of young King Edward V. and his brother in the Tower.
The landing of the Earl of Richmond; and the death of King Richard in the memorable battle of Bosworth-field, being the last that was fought between the houses of York and Lancaster.

With many other true Historical passages.

The part of King Richard by a Gentleman (who never appeared on any Stage).

King Henry by Mr. Giffard; Richmond, Mr. Marshall; Prince Edward by Miss Hippisley; Duke of York, Miss Naylor; Duke of Buckingham, Mr. Patterson; Duke of Norfolk, Mr. Blakes; Lord Stanley, Mr. Pagett; Oxford, Mr. Vaughan; Tressel, Mr. W. Giffard; Catesby, Mr. Marr; Ratcliff, Mr. Crofts; Blunt, Mr. Naylor; Tyrrel, Mr. Puttenham; Lord Mayor, Mr. Dunstall: The Queen, Mrs. Steel; Duchess of York, Mrs. Yates;

And the part of Lady Anne
By Mrs. GIFFARD.

With Entertainments of Dancing,
By Mons. Fromet, Madam Duvalt,
And the two Masters and
Miss Granier.

To which will be added,
A Ballad Opera of One Act, called,
THE VIRGIN UNMASK'D.
The part of Lucy by Miss Hippisley.

Both of which will be performed gratis, by persons for their diversion.

The Concert will begin exactly at Six o'Clock.

Having had occasion to mention Mr. Mossop in the preceding part of these Memoirs, I shall beg leave to introduce to the sympathising reader, the following melancholy account of this deservedly admired actor.

Mr. Ryder, in the year 1771, rose upon the ruins of the august Mossop. Mr. Ryder received from the latter the confidential trust by a power of attorney, with the management of his shattered affairs, while he went himself to London, to engage performers. But,

as misfortune was determined not to desist persecuting him until his entire ruin was effected, he was thrown into prison for a debt contracted in Dublin; and, although he was soon liberated, the disgrace so operated upon his proud heart, that he pined, and soon afterwards died a victim to his sensibility. The sympathising reader will excuse this digression, while I relate the melancholy circumstance of the death of this extraordinary and admired actor.

This unhappy gentleman having been defrauded of a large sum of money by the artifice of a villainous attorney, and being in a very distressed condition, after having encountered the miseries of a jail, was so affected through his exigences, that it threw him into a melancholy. He had some friends in London, from whom he accepted now and

then a small sum to subsist on. He was necessitated to rip the lace off some clothes he purchased for his wardrobe; he sold it, and by that sale announcing himself a dealer and chapman, he had a commission of bankruptcy issued out against him, and made a resolution of never returning to Ireland. He commissioned one Captain Smith, an intimate friend of his, to sound the London managers with regard to an engagement.

He had then been absent from a London audience nearly twelve years, and his faculties were not in the least impaired, he therefore conceived that the managers would have gladly embraced the opportunity of entering upon an agreement with him: they were resolved, however (though conscious of his merit), to humble his highblown pride, and refused to receive any overtures

to an engagement, unless made by personal application. This determination of the *royal despots*, added to the mortification and disappointment of the theatrical Timon, determined him to adopt the most extraordinary resolution that ever man, exempt from bodily pains, and surrounded by friends, willing, and in a capacity to serve him to the utmost, ever, I believe, undertook. This was no other but to refuse all manner of food, or any other sustenance, but rather perish than apply to the managers in person.

This unnatural purpose of destroying his life, he too fatally performed at his lodgings in Chelsea. His landlady, a good tender-hearted woman, was greatly surprised, on the evening of his first day's fast, that he never once rang his bell, as usual, yet did she hear him almost continually walking about

his chamber. The good creature guessed at his distressed condition, and could not resist the feelings of humanity which moved her to visit him. She went to his door, and knocked gently at it several times. Mossop demanded from within, "Who's there?"

"'Tis I, sir," said she.

"What is it you want, madam?"

"Only come to ask you, sir, whether you want any thing that I can serve you with?"

"No, nothing at all, I am busy Mrs. ——"

"Well, sir, if you should stand in need of my assistance, I hope you will be so good as to let me know it."

"I sincerely thank you, good Mrs. ——. When I want your assistance I shall certainly give you notice; 'till then, I beg you will not trouble me."

The landlady dejectedly retired; but

not hearing from him, about two o'clock next day she stole up to his room door, and looking through the key-hole saw the wretched Mossop leaning on a table, with a pair of pocket pistols before him, seemingly agitated, and in great perturbation of mind. Being greatly alarmed on discovering him in this condition, she stole softly down, and in great terror disclosed what she had observed to her husband, who immediately went up stairs and knocked pretty smartly at the door: he was answered with the usual "who's there?" in a faint querulous tone of voice.

"Pray, sir, be so good as to let me in?"

"Begone, friend," said Mossop, in an elevated tone of voice, "You have no business here—nor shall you enter this room."

"Come, come, sir," said the man, "it can be for no good purpose that you shut yourself up these two days past, without fire or food, or any other of the necessaries of life."

"Begone, fellow, I say again."

"I beseech you, sir, allow me to bring some food," exclaimed the landlord.

"If you do not fly this instant," replies Mossop, "I'll shoot you through the key-hole."

The humane landlord, finding all entreaties vain, declared that he would force in the door. Mossop was obstinate in his purpose, and vowed that he would shoot the first man who entered his apartment.

About eight o'clock that evening, Mossop's especial friend, Captain Smith, arrived; he had been in the country some days, and on his entrance was

for rushing up stairs, as usual, without ceremony, but was stopped short by the landlady, who informed him of poor Mossop's situation. He listened to the whole with astonishment and concern; but, as he made no doubt of obtaining admission upon the first notice being given of his visit, he walked up and immediately knocked at the door—no answer was returned—the devoted self-martyr supposed it was one of the family who had come to torment him again with their useless entreaties. After repeated knocks at the door and wainscot alternately, the Captain called out, "Harry, Harry Mossop, for God's sake open the door! 'tis your friend Smith conjures you."

"Mr. Smith," replied the miserable object within, "you can have no business with me that I can possibly attend to now. Let me see you to-morrow;

I cannot let you come in now; leave me, I beg you will."

"By the recollection of our friendship, I entreat you'll let me in; I bring you nourishment."

"Your entreaties are in vain, Mr. Smith, I am not in want of nourishment, you have been misinformed; and as you value your life, which is dearer to me than my own, disturb me no more this night; suffer me to get some repose, for indeed I want it."

The Captain, finding all solicitation fruitless, retired, and recommended to his landlord and landlady to try methods of soft persuasion to induce him to take some refreshment; that he would come at an early hour in the morning, and bring with him some of his most intimate acquaintances; and if he should then persist in barring the door against them, they would cer-

tainly pursue the only method on such occasions, and force their way to him.

Accordingly in the morning he came with a number of their common friends, and rapped loudly at the door, but no answer was returned. They then proceeded to force, and burst it open. But, here I confess myself incapable of describing the horror they were all seized with, at sight of the lost wretch lying stretched on his back upon the bed, no way resembling the sturdy Mossop, but his anatomy!—I must here draw a veil over this sad spectacle, and I hope my readers will not blame me for dilating on the circumstances of this unusual catastrophe. To see a rational creature, with a mind well cultivated, coolly and deliberately, (I had almost said rationally), consume his precious life, and without any visible cause, form a plot against his own

existence. Could any thing be more incongruous to man's nature, than such a crime as this?—Some may answer me, that his *great heart* could no longer suffer the keen arrows of adversity to pierce it. *His pride was hurt*—it may be so; but how must the Majesty of heaven be offended by the presence of a self-murderer! It is an established axiom, that self-preservation is the first law of nature; and the whole brute creation concur in giving their assent to this self-evident principle. The divine Plato, as he is called, and very justly, reasons in words to the following purport:—

"Why shrinks the soul back on herself
And startles at destruction?——
'Tis the divinity that speaks within us,
'Tis Heaven itself that points out an hereafter,
And intimates eternity to Man."

Mr. Vernon.

The following account of this favourite singer and actor, having never yet been published, it is presumed will prove acceptable to my readers.

In the year 1752, Mr. Richard Yates, and Mr. John Palmer, stopped, on their journey to Birmingham, where they were going to open their newly erected theatre, at the Bull Inn in Coventry. Proposing to remain here for the night, they were solacing themselves with a cheerful glass after dinner, when their ears were saluted by the melodious sounds of a young warbler. Their conversation was instantly suspended, in order to listen more attentively to the wild notes of the songster. The doors of the dining-room were, at the same moment, thrown open, to enable them to hear more distinctly the words of

the song which had so engaged their attention.

Being considerably gratified at hearing the words agree with the melody and expression of the music, they rang the bell, and enquired of the host who the youth was by whom they had been so much delighted; whether he was sent for to entertain a select party in the kitchen, or had come there by chance? To these questions the landlord answered, that the singer was a poor lad, who deserved and received the greatest encouragement from the inhabitants of Coventry and its neighbourhood, not only for his taste in singing, but for his goodness towards his mother: for every penny that he collects by his innocent trade of singing at different public houses, he gives to her. This generosity and filial affection still more stimulated the theatric

strangers to desire a sight of the boy. Young Vernon was immediately introduced, blushing like the morn. Being cheared with a glass of wine, he was desired to sing one of his best songs. Without much intreaty, he very modestly complied. The actors were charmed. Mr. Yates asked him, if this talent was the only means of his subsistence?

"No," answered the boy, "a good-natured man, who is a plush weaver in our town, has offered to take me prentice, without a fee. But though I should like to learn some trade, by which I might get an honest livelihood, yet I could not find it in my heart to leave my helpless mother to the mercy of parish officers, who might almost starve her. Rather than she should want, I would beg for her from door to door as long as I live."

"My boy," said Mr. Yates, "you possess a noble heart; your regard for your poor mother will ensure you happiness through life. I know not how it is, but I never was so much prepossessed or interested in favour of a stranger, as I am with you, my dear lad. But to the point at once—Can you, landlord, vouch for the boy's honesty?"

"Indeed, sir," answered the landlord, "he has never given any person the least reason to suspect it. And would he live with me as a drawer, I would be glad to take him without any security."

"That's sufficient," replied Yates. "My good lad, how should you like to wear a livery, and attend a gentleman?"

"I should like it very well, sir," answered the young vocalist. "But, sir, what will become of my mother?"

"Pooh, pooh! your mother," replied Yates, "will be glad to see you provided for; and if you will agree to go with me to Birmingham, you shall not want for encouragement. And if your mother will not object to bind you to me for a term of five years, I will allow her two shillings a-week, which, with the allowance the parish must give her, will prove a comfortable subsistence."

"You belong to the actors, sir, do you?" asked the boy.

"Yes," answered Yates, "would you not be glad of the opportunity of seeing plays for nothing every night?"

"O yes, dear sir," replied the young lad, "it would be the delight of my heart. You must know, sir, that I offered myself to the master of the actors that play in the hay-loft over the stables at the Half-Moon here. I think

they call him Mr. Squelch. But he told me that he could sing better himself, and that my voice was common enough every where."

"What," said Palmer, "are there players in your town, landlord?"

"Yes, sir," replied the landlord, "they came here at our Lady Godiva fair: it seems they claimed the common privilege of other shows and sights.—But they have remained here longer than the time granted them by the mayor, to take benefits. They are but a weary set, as a body may say. We shall soon, however, have the *Great Ward*, who has taken our *Old Bridewell* here below, in the *Bobblicks*, and he intends to make a shining play-house of it. He has now a very great company at Birmingham: many of them are no less than *Londoners*; and I am sorry to tell you, gentlemen, if you are going

to play there against him, you will find him a tough match for you: he is a rich old fellow. He swore here in my house t'other day to some gentlemen, that he would work you a pen'worth, if it cost him even the last inch of land, or the last spangle upon his clothes."

"We thank you, landlord," said Palmer, leering at his brother manager, who was more attentive to the engagement of young Vernon, than to the intelligence given by his landlord. To complete his wish of having the boy instantly bound to him, the mother was sent for. She came, and being informed of Yates's intention, was overjoyed to hear of her own, and her son's good fortune, in finding such an honourable master as Mr. Yates promised to be.

An attorney that night bound the boy to the joyful manager. Having

taken next morning a tender leave of his mother, and being fitted by his master with decent apparel, he set off for the famous town of Birmingham, where, for a few weeks, he served Yates as a lacquey; but wore no other badge of livery than a crimson collar. Yates, however, soon found the means of employing the lad's talents to much greater advantage than running errands or handing a tea-kettle.

To prepare the boy for his change of occupation, he was sent to school, where he learnt to read, &c. with such rapidity, that he was not only the praise, but the astonishment of all who knew him. By his own private means and application, he learnt dancing from some professors employed by the managers as stage-figuranti; and, by acute and incessant observation, he corrected his provincial dialect, so as to speak

upon the most common subjects with singular ease, spirit, and propriety.

All this improvement was effected in a few weeks. Although these qualifications were in their infancy, yet they escaped not the notice of Mr. Yates.—Being the acting manager, he was possessed of more power than any other of the company. This authority he exerted, in trying the talents of his young servant on the stage. Having great hopes, from several specimens he had given in private, that he should derive great emolument by employing him on the stage, he soon prepared him for the scene, and as a farther encouragement, allowed him a small salary. That the lad might no longer consider himself as a servant, he was divested of his red collar, which Mr. Yates perceived had some time been considered by him as the insignia of

slavery. Being graced with a smart laced hat, and a waistcoat trimmed with silver, he was announced in the bills of the play, to sing between the acts, under the name of MASTER VERNON. He was received with the greatest applause, and soon became one of the chief supporters of the theatre.

His improvements were so rapid, that in a very short time he became one of the most popular ornaments, both as an actor and a singer, the London stage had to boast for a series of years. In the last of these dramatic perfections he had but few competitors. His judgment was correct, his execution rapid, and his expression such as went to every heart. Mr. Yates, on his return to London, proposed to resign the remaining time of his servitude to Mr. Garrick, for a valuable consideration. The boy's rapid pro-

gress and fame having reached the capital, induced that consummate judge of theatrical perfection to accept Mr. Yates's proposal. Garrick knew the value of the treasure he had in part purchased, and determined to spare no expence in the cultivation of so exuberant and sweet a gem as he conceived Vernon to be: he, therefore, for the advantage of both, had him instructed in music, dancing, fencing, &c. his mind was also improved by attaining a knowledge of polite literature. These accomplishments were soon attained by such a capacity as that of Vernon's. This forward plant was carefully cherished by his master, Garrick. The town received him with attention and favour, and his great talents secured their admiration and esteem, while he continued before them.

WOODWARD AND STAYLEY.

The success of Woodward and Barry on the opening of the new theatre in Crow-street, very speedily occasioned Mr. Sheridan to abdicate his dramatic throne, and seek a refuge in England. He was, however, so much esteemed by the public, and so much respected by his performers for the mildness of his government, and the punctuality of his payments, that he found his grateful subjects, although absent from them, steady in their exertions to reinstate him in his former power.

Among his firmest adherents was an author of the name of Stayley, who could use a pen with as much effect and dexterity as he could a foil or a truncheon. Being one of the defenders of Smock-alley theatre against the formidable powers of the new house, he

frequently diverted the town with his well-timed satires on Woodward and Barry; for he considered the former as the chief cause of Sheridan's overthrow.

Mr. Garrick's satire of Lethe, used especially to raise the laugh against Mr. Woodward, he being the original fine gentleman in this dramatic trifle; and Stayley perceiving that the London adventurers were disbursing more than it then appeared they would receive, availed himself of this circumstance to satirize the folly and credulity of *Woodward*, whom he knew was expending his hard-earned fortune in a vain and giddy enterprize. For this purpose he altered *Lethe*. Æsop was continued as usual, to examine every mortal that was introduced by Mercury: but, instead of Garrick's fancied fine gentleman, Mr. Woodward was introduced

in propria persona, and represented by George Stayley. Even the dress he commonly wore in Dublin streets was imitated: this was a fustian frock and nankeen small clothes, with this difference, that Stayley's breeches pockets were turned inside out.

Thus equipped, Stayley enters, stands at an humble distance, looks very sheepish, heaves a dismal groan, and thus accosts his old acquaintance Æsop.

"Your humble servant, Mr. Æsop."

Æsop. "Sir, I am your humble servant; but really I don't know you, sir."

Woodward. "I don't wonder at that, good Mr. Æsop; for really I have forgotten myself—Heigh ho!"

Æsop. "If you have forgotten yourself, I fear the waters of Lethe will not assist your recollection."

Woodward. "You misunderstand

me, Mr. Æsop. I don't mean that—I have forgot who *I was*—but I would most willingly forget who *I am*, and erase from my remembrance all former traces of myself. Pray, dear sir, examine the features of my chop-fallen countenance; and then, perhaps, you may—nay, you must recollect me."

Æsop. "With the greatest accuracy I have inspected your doleful countenance, and cannot remember to have seen you before. Tell me your name, good sighing, sobbing sir."

Woodward. "My name is, sir, Marplot O'Blunder, formerly known to you by the name of the *fine gentleman.* But that was when I was getting money in London, and not losing it, like an ass, in Dublin. Although I was then only a journeyman player, yet since I have turned manager, curse me if I can keep one shilling to rub against another

in my pocket. I have, therefore, abandoned, even in fiction, the name of a gentleman.—Heigh ho!"

Æsop. "Were you not afraid of catching cold by putting on wet breeches? for I suppose they are but just washed, by your hanging the pockets out to dry."

Woodward. "You are again mistaken, Mr. Æsop. Yet I can't help smiling at your pleasantry. But to inform you truly, philosopher—with regard to your thinking this a whim in me, I must acquaint your wisdom, that, in better times, my breeches pockets served me for two material purposes, *videlicet*, to put in my loose money, and to put my hands in whenever I performed a part of distinction. There is more merit in the manner of placing your hands in the breeches pockets than can possibly be conceived by any person but an actor."

Æsop. "I thank you, sir, for your candid communication; but my friends, Demosthenes, Cicero, Pericles, Roscius, Æsopus, and a long train of orators that have resided a considerable time among us, have told me that they always kept their hands at liberty whilê they were fascinating their auditors with their judicious acting and irresistible eloquence."

Woodward. "Sir, they wore no breeches. Ha, ha, ha! Had they had such aids as we moderns, they would have found their service. They would not, as we are told they did, "saw the air." They were very aukward, indeed they were, Master Æsop—witness their characteristic violent stamping of the foot. Ah! sir, we know better."

Æsop. "I know you do. And now, sir, what is your particular business with me?"

Woodward. "Why, sir, I am come to let you know that I am in the same predicament as a certain Yorkshire gentleman, whose name is Sir Francis Wronghead. My coming to Dublin has proved a very foolish journey. Although I am not come to start a candidate for parliament, I am such a simpleton as to have come here to manage a theatre-royal without a patent, and, what is worse, without patronage. But I know not how it was—I believe the same devil that caused Thurot to invade Ireland, was certainly concerned in sending me, Marplot O'Blunder, to invade the managerial throne. Heaven forbid that I should meet with a similar fate. Marplot would rather return, with a whole skin at least, to his dear native country, England. He would even be contented to return with an empty stomach, as well as empty pock,

Ah! sir, were you to know what easy life I led with my master, Ros-s, in London. Why, my vails and istmas-boxes—not to mention my ital salary, Heigh ho! amounted to re than all I can possibly get in Dub-, Cork, or indeed in any other part our king's dominions. Pity me, O y me, my dear Mr. Æsop, and give the advice of your matchless wis-m. Never having been known to oll in England, is it not hard that w strolling should be the word?"

Æsop. "Very hard, indeed, especially be the first on the list of mock royal nagers, who had been reduced to so did and shameful an alternative. ur deplorable case really excites my mpassion. Even your enemies must y, poor devil, your hapless situation. ith respect to my advice, if I must e it, it is—Go back to your master

—Nay, start not! but resume that penitential face in which you first attracted my attention. Being, as you state, sensible of your merit, he will certainly listen to your tale, if told with the humility and repentance of the prodigal son."

Woodward. "O, sir, you don't know my old master, Roscius. Although he pardons small injuries, yet I have frequently heard him declare that he would never forgive ingratitude."

Æsop. "Nay, if you have been guilty of ingratitude, "your deed's upon your head, enjoy your reward—a night of moral shade."

Ingratum si dixeris omnia dicis.

Woodward. "How can I, therefore, with any sort of face, humble or penitential, approach him? Were he even to take me again into his favour, his

daily presence would be to me a perpetual reproach.

[A loud barking heard, imitating a large mastiff.]

Æsop. "Don't be surprised, 'tis only Cerberus, sir. He's barking, I suppose, at some mortal just landed by Charon."

Woodward. "Cerberus? I really, Mr. Æsop, thought it was the hideous noise of one of my performers. We have, you must know, one Zanga Coriolanus, whose voice is, in some of his ranting speeches, loud enough to wake the dead. Your Grecian Stentor would make but a contemptible bawler in the presence of our modern dramatic hero. O that you would but hear him!—but all in good time. Why, sir, he has more than once injured my hearing. But the best of the joke is, to see and hear my partner pretending to swell and outbellow Zanga! There is no more

comparison in their powers of modulation than in the soft easy tones of a flagelet and a full chorus of Handel. If you have time and will honour me with a call at my lodging on the College-green, I will present you with an order. I give away daily whole packs of orders to people not half so deserving of my favours as you are, my dear friend, Mr. Æsop."

Æsop. "I thank you heartily, Mr. Marplot O'Blunder, but I cannot accept of your kind offer: both duty and inclination confine me for ever to these lower regions. I would, however, recommend to you a large draught of our oblivious waters. Were they only to make you forget the folly of depriving yourself, in the wane of life, of a future subsistence, their effects would certainly be most desirable. Whether this misconduct of turning manager was dic-

tated by folly or madness, is not for me now to enquire. In that grove you will find a seat planted with willows: there you may, at leisure, ruminate upon the weakness that has brought you into your present truly lamentable situation."

Woodward. "Which is the path, Mr. Æsop, to this happy bower? Must I turn to the right or to the left?"

Æsop. "The left, most certainly, Mr. Marplot."

Woodward. "Well, as soon as is convenient, serve me with this most desirable beverage of forgetfulness; for I would fain lose all remembrance of myself till I can produce a pantomime which I am with all speed preparing. This production will affright and astonish the whole town, fill my pockets, and thus enable me to discharge all arrears due to my performers. You are,

Mr. Æsop, a most venerable heathen. To extend your compassion to a poor persecuted Christian, is the most liberal beneficence. Do you know, sir, that dire necessity obliges me to break the Sabbath in all rehearsals, or more properly, practices of Harlequin entertainments? And for this breach of social duty, I am threatened by the churchwardens of St. Andrew's. I am also disturbed with frequent alarms from a more terrible quarter than a parochial enquiry; *inter nos*, Mr. Esop, no less than a citation from the Bishop's court! Sad work, Mr. Æsop. I know your charity will sympathize with my poor and hopeless condition. Now, there's my brother manager takes no other trouble to hook in, as we term it, an audience than mounting proudly his gilt triumphal car, a car ornamented at my expence. In this state he surrounds him-

self with his awkward squad of supernumeraries, while I am devoted to be the only sufferer. Although he is a Dublin boy, as he vauntingly calls himself, and well acquainted with all the civilians, and all the other limbs of the courts, he only laughs at my apprehensions, without interesting himself the least in my favour. A word from him would certainly save me from what I may suffer by Sabbath-breaking. But, sir, I perceive you grow tired of hearing my grievances; and therefore, *au revoir*, as I always said at parting with you, my thrice-honoured monitor."

[*Exit Woodward.*

VERNON.

Some events during the last four years in Ireland have excited the astonishment of this country, and in a de-

gree even injured that kingdom in the public estimation of the sister island.

To whatever cause it may be imputed, the passions of the Irish are doubtless more ardent, and therefore more frequently productive of the most guilty excesses, than those of their fellow-subjects. Let not this be construed into the illiberality of national reflection: Ireland has ever had its just repute: it is the land of honour and hospitality; but its lower classes, and such of its higher orders as resemble them, have more ferocity and less respect to laws human and divine, in the indulgence of their passionate impulses, than we are accustomed to see in England. Such must be the inference from the events of the present day; and as national character either slowly or never varies, such will be found to have ever been their characteristic. The event that removed

Mr. Vernon from the Irish stage, some years ago, is an eminent example.

Woodward and Barry having commenced their management of Crow-street Theatre in the year 1758, and Vernon being at that time in high repute as a singer on the English stage, they thought it might turn to account to tempt him to their banners. A salary greater than had ever been given to any former singer was offered, and after something of dramatic coquetry, accepted with feigned reluctance.

His course, however, though brilliant, was but short. The Brown Bear coffee-house was at that time the favourite resort of the Dublin actors. In the interval of the acts Vernon had one evening slipped out to the enjoyment of this his favourite lounge. His dialogue with the good-humoured landlady was suddenly interrupted by the

entrance of three young fellows vociferously demanding, with drawn swords, "the rascal who had affronted them." "D—n the infernal rascal, he took the wall of me," exclaimed the leader of the three; "give him up to us, madam, or we'll bury him and yourself in the ruins of your house. We saw him enter this house: think not to shelter him, for by G— he shall not so escape us."

In vain did the affrighted landlady protest that no one had entered her house in the manner they had described.

In this moment a young man, seated peaceably by the fire, happened to turn his head towards the infuriate sparks.

"Here he is, here he is!" exclaimed they all at once; and without more words their leader, a young man, in the habit of a scholar of the college, plunged his sword into the bosom of the hap-

less victim, and his example was imitated with increased fury by his two companions.

My hand trembles whilst I record this act of savage murder, this deliberate butchery; for as the youth did not expire in the moment of receiving the three stabs, each repeated his stroke, till the work of murder was accomplished.

Mr. Vernon gazed a moment in stupid horror: the feelings of a man at length impelled him forwards to repel so brutal a murder. The landlady, however, forcibly detained him, her faculties being suspended in terror. The murderers having completed their act fled—no, not fled, but calmly, tranquilly retired to the theatre.

Will any one credit this atrocity? yet the public record remains. I appeal

to that document: I repeat that the scene was the Brown Bear, now an inferior tavern at the corner of Temple-lane, the time the year 1759, and the chief, the leader of these honourable bandits, the son of Lady D— T—.

The murderers were of course followed to the theatre, and delivered up to the hands of justice. Justice, however, was by some means rendered ineffectual; for when the trial came on, and the witnesses were summoned, no one appeared, the evidence having been bought off.—Shame! where is thy blush?

Let it not be here supposed that the writer of these memoirs intends any reflection on the criminal law of Ireland, or on the integrity of those by whom it was at that period administered. The presiding judge was a man of equal learning and unsuspected purity.

And little as may be the legal knowledge of the writer of these memoirs, he need not be told that it is the excellence of the British criminal law to require that amplitude of proof, which admits of the escape of an hundred of the guilty, rather than risk the more fatal error of the condemnation of one innocent.

However eager for the interests of justice, Mr. Vernon was compelled to listen to a more immediate interest, and to return to England. He was accompanied in his return by the son of his favourite landlady, young Hodgins. The unsuccessful management of the Crow-street Theatre inspired the latter with the resolution of seeking his fortune in England. He was an excellent scene-painter, an art of more difficulty and real skill than public estimation. His preceptor, Mr. Carver, was amongst

the most able painters of the day, and Hodgins has not fallen short of his master.

The greater part of the older scenes of Covent-garden Theatre are from the hands of the one or other of these artists. There is a boldness, an originality, a contempt of the common-place of scenic picturesque, which well merited the admiration it has received, and eminently display the taste and imagination of Hodgins.

MESSINK.

How endless is the chain of our ideas! Let a man of common retention, and a very ordinary fancy, seize one of the numerous threads of his memory, and he knows not where the clue will lead him;

Nor where the regular confusion ends.

The mention of Hodgins recalls most forcibly to my mind the memory of my once loved Messink. I cannot withhold a just tribute to my deceased companion. Let it, therefore, be here acknowledged, that his rich conceptions embraced all the excellence necessary to complete and embellish both the painter and machinist. And here let friendship drop one tributary tear at the recollection of the fate of this deserving and celebrated character. Being in the decline of life, the munificence of a dutiful and affectionate son promised that the remainder of his days should end in peace. The theatrical part of my readers will no doubt recollect some particulars of a company of gentlemen who amused themselves with private theatricals at Calcutta, in the East Indies. About seven-and-twenty years ago, Mr. Garrick, in the highest good humour,

read a letter from India addressed to him, and signed by several gentlemen at Calcutta, requesting that able theatrical caterer to send them a gentleman capable of conducting their theatre. And as a strong inducement, the gentlemen pledged themselves to give such a person an ample salary, with such contingent perquisites as would make it in every respect deserving his attention and acceptance. "Now, ladies and gentlemen," said Roscius, "who among you are inclined to acquire a fortune in the east with the facility and expedition of a nabob? You must understand that I am not confined in my commission, to send none but a conductor of stage concerns: ladies and gentlemen both of the sock and buskin are required. Those who enter upon this service will be accommodated in the best manner on board a Company's ship, supplied with

equipment-money here in England, and even instructed by competent judges how to provide every necessary for the voyage and sojournment in India."

Among the ladies this communication excited a titter without an answer. Nor did any of the gentlemen seem to listen to the golden advantages of the promised land, except the prudent Messink. Being himself advanced in years, and engaged with Mr. Garrick at a certain, comfortable, and respectable salary *durante vitâ*, he had no incentive to embrace so flattering an offer for himself. But his anxious desire to see his son acquire a fortune, induced him to communicate the news to him, and to advise him to undertake the management of the whole plan. The young man consented, and on his arrival in India all his hopes were very soon gratified. And to convince his fond father of his

success, as well as his filial affection, he sent a remittance which enabled his parent to enjoy a comfortable competency. This was transmitted even before it could have been thought possible for young Messink himself to have realized a single rupee, at least beyond what was necessary to support the figure expected from Europeans of respectability in our Asiatic territories. In a word, after a very short stay, having realized a fortune of twenty-seven thousand pounds, acquired with equal ability, industry, and integrity, he was desirous of returning to England to enjoy his acquisitions with his beloved parent. He communicated his intentions to a friend who commanded one of the homeward-bound ships, who kindly offered him a free passage to England, provided he could reconcile himself to accompany him to Bencoolen, where he was to

touch in his way home. Young Messink's strong attachment to his friend determined him to accompany him, although it was attended with the delay and danger of a circuitous voyage. In vain did his friends represent the danger to which he was exposed by even touching at such a place; and though they united in one common sentiment that Bencoolen was justly considered as the grave of the English, no persuasion could deter him from the voyage. He humorously said, "that as it was the grave of the English, he being an Irishman convinced him of his safety." But, however, whether the hour-glass of his existence had dropt its last sandy particle, or whether he fell an untimely victim to his own temerity, he had no sooner arrived at Bencoolen, that *Dutch oven* of *mortality*, than he fell, in the vigour of life, by a most fatal disorder, to

the great regret of his Asiatic friends, and his European relatives.

The fatal news reaching his father at Dublin, embittered the close of his days, although the worthy son had left to his disposal the whole of his fortune. The afflicted parent came immediately to London and took possession of the legacy; but his debility and extreme anguish soon took him from the enjoyment of his wealth. The rheumatic gout and other chronic diseases so preyed on his weakened frame, that he soon fell a victim to age, infirmity, and affliction.

MESSRS. ALDRIDGE, SLINGSBY, AND ELLARD.

Being now in the precincts of Crow-street Theatre, it is presumed a further introduction into the Green-room will not be deemed unacceptable to the reader.

Having already introduced him to some acquaintance with Messrs. Barry, Woodward, and Vernon, we proceed to the mention of others no less distinguished in an inferior walk indeed of dramatic excellence. The late improvements in the ballet have indeed advanced that part of the scenic art to a higher degree of estimation, and given something of the regularity of art, and even the dignity of science, to what has been hitherto considered as harlequinade; but in the year 1760 it had not reached its present excellence.

One of the most eminent in this art was Mr. Rob. Aldridge, justly deemed the first stage-dancer that ever appeared on the Irish boards. His invention was only equalled by his execution, and in both he surpassed any idea that words can convey. This is not the language of partial eulogy; Mr. Aldridge and his

pupil Mr. Slingsby were long without competitors, and might have borne away the palm even from the most celebrated names of a later period.

Mr. Aldridge was born in the town of Andee, in the county of Lowth. The profession of his father was that of a dancing-master. Young Aldridge, having learnt with his parent the rudiments of his profession, left home at the age of 15, with no other prospect of succeeding than the possession of an uncommon agility and a great attachment to dancing. So unpromising were his prospects at home, that he could never have expected to have risen above the situation of a music-master to a provincial school, at least as long as he remained with his father. But this worthy parent was not so selfish, or so indifferent to the interests of his son, as to wish to confine him in his own con-

tracted sphere of daily attendance on the scholars of Dr. Norris, at Drogheda, where the *coupee* and the boree were taught to the young gentlemen of that seminary. He possessed a more extensive and liberal mind: he agreed, therefore, for the sum of one hundred guineas with Mr. Sam. Lee, the leader of the Smock-alley band, during Mr. Sheridan's management of that theatre, to instruct his son in the science of music, and particularly in the practice of the violin, of which Mr. Lee was allowed to be the greatest master of his day. In some respects, indeed, and particularly with regard to his knowledge and execution of time, he was not inferior even to Geminiani, Aragoni, or the famous Dubourg.

Young Aldridge, being accustomed during his pupilage to see a long succession of foreign dancers, felt the im-

pulse of his natural propensity, and was determined to seize the first opportunity of trying his own talents in the same way. Conscious that he could trip it "on the light fantastic toe" as featly as the best of them, he engaged in 1755, for a few months, with a company of players who were going from Dublin to Kilkenny. Aldridge easily prevailed upon Lee to grant him leave of absence during the theatrical vacation in Dublin. He was indeed engaged only as a performer in the orchestra, and even this at a salary only conditional upon his success. But his primary object was the hopes of having frequent opportunities of shaking his heels upon the stage, as well as his arm in the orchestra. His hopes were gratified; for having danced, with the most flattering applause, for the benefit of a friend, several others of the performers

solicited his high-flying exertions on their respective nights. His good nature and attachment to dancing united to induce him to comply with all their requests. His youthful vanity was every night most pleasingly flattered by loud and general plaudits.

The close of September, the period for opening the Dublin theatre, prevented his appearing any longer before his friends and countrymen as the hero of hornpipe: nothing but the odious orchestra presented itself, in which he was convinced he had no opportunity of appearing with the eclat of excellence, the talents of his master being too superior to leave him the faintest expectation of rivalship. He grew, therefore, dissatisfied with his situation, a circumstance that was perceived by his master, who, being of a haughty disposition, concealed with dif-

ficulty his displeasure. However, in January 1756, which was before the end of the season, Aldridge being much improved in dancing, went to Drogheda. He here met with a man whose name was Gordon M'Neille, a favourite hornpipe dancer; Aldridge adopted him in the instant for his model. But having been told, at his probation at Kilkenny, that he excelled this Don, he could no longer endure being merely a spectator of this M'Neille's performance.

Mr. Sheriff's company being then playing at Drogheda, an opportunity offered itself to Aldridge to display before his father's scholars how greatly he had improved. Old Philip Lewis, who was an actor in this company, having a benefit approaching, requested the favour of the young dancer to perform Harlequin for him on his night. The

favour was granted, and the performance of the pantomime was preceded by Aldridge's hornpipe. In both parts he was honoured with so much deserved applause, that his pride of heart prompted him to declare that for him all the fiddles might be pitched from Drogheda to Cremona.

His reputation being in some degree established by these performances, he was induced to follow the fortunes of that part of the company which adhered to Lewis during the succeeding summer; but his income not being adequate to his promised and expected enjoyments, he very prudently returned once more to Drogheda, his father, and his vocation. The Aldridge school improved by a daily increase of scholars. The sons and daughters of the most respectable and distinguished were under their joint tuition. The accomplished

young Mr. Balls, of Balls-grove, who have since been conspicuous ornaments to their country and their family, treated young Aldridge with that affable familiarity, which is equally an honour to the elevated and subordinate. But in this they only followed the excellent lesson which the all-accomplished Sir Richard Steele has given in his character of Bevil, in the Conscious Lovers, that no man is degraded by an honest exertion of his talents, and that kindness and protection in its different degrees is the common debt of man to man.

Although Aldridge was now so generally caressed by all that was fashionable and respectable in his immediate neighbourhood, he could not content himself until he made one grand effort at what he conceived would put him in possession of an independency. His

object was to emulate, if not excel, those whom he considered his competitors in the fame of stage dancing.

Animated with the thought of leaping over the heads of all who stood in his professional path to fame and fortune, he went to Dublin in 1758, which was soon after the commencement of Woodward and Barry's management. Arriving at the Hibernian capital, he engaged with them on very moderate terms. Here his modesty of deportment considerably recommended him to Mr. Woodward, whose skill in the *hop*, *step*, and *jump*, was acknowledged to be unquestionable. He likewise derived great assistance from the elder Messink, who was a good mime and a principal figurante, and had a fertile genius at the invention of ballets. Aldridge's execution exceeded all possible expectation, when the short period of his prac-

tice in ballets was considered. Although he had a host of formidable competitors in Signior Leuca, Fabiano, Marsigni, and the Irish hero Gordy M'Neille, he surmounted every difficulty, routed his enemies, and finally so triumphed over all opposition, as to gain the direction of the ballets, and the entire sovereignty of the springing-board. In this state of success he took pupils, and received salaries, which almost immediately raised him to the independence for which he had so long sighed, and so unremittingly pursued.

Having before mentioned that Slingsby was under his tuition, an anecdote respecting that incomparable dancer, which was communicated to me by Mr. Woodward himself, will not be here impertinent.

Messink, as before observed, was a dancer, but not in the modish way.

Now, whether he had enviously conceived a personal pique against Slingsby, or had not noticed with sufficient candour and judgment his progress, he pronounced him a dunce, an incorrigible blockhead, without the least ear or taste for the art of dancing; he therefore deemed him entirely inadequate to the profession in which he had engaged. Infusing the same opinion into the mind of the manager, Woodward, he had very nearly deprived Europe of the inimitable talents of Slingsby, who was then a figurante at the low salary of eleven shillings per week. But fortunately for him his master Aldridge knowing his abilities, persuaded the manager to continue his promising pupil at whatever salary he might think he deserved. The celebrity of Slingsby has since proved that Aldridge evinced either more judgment or liberality than Messink.

If the eminence of this performer was in some degree owing to the ardour, in other words, natural genius which at first impelled him to this art, and afterwards accompanied him in his progress, still more is it to be imputed to that invincible industry and obstinate persevering labour with which he stretched towards the goal never for a moment absent from his mind's eye. And never indeed has the happy effect of such perseverance been more forcibly exemplified. If Demosthenes, according to his biographer Plutarch, made himself a voice, and became an orator in despite of nature, Slingsby fought a battle equally hard, and gained a victory, allowing for the difference of the objects of the warfare, equally brilliant. Never was a man so little formed for a dancer as Slingsby. His figure was clumsy, and the calves of his

legs those of a porter. For years did he submit to the voluntary penance of the most severe exercise during six hours of the day to overcome this impediment. He at length succeeded—a victory over a natural obstacle, which if gained for a nobler purpose, and by a hero instead of a dancer, would have been justly celebrated, as the proof of vigour of mind, and a happy example of the effect of industry.

By these and other similar exertions Slingsby approached so near the excellence of his master Aldridge, that it was a subject of discussion amongst the critics, whether he had not reached and even surpassed it. But it is an injustice too frequent to detract the laurels from the master to deck the brow of his rising pupil. It is perhaps some gratification to envy to lessen the fame of the one by advancing that of the

other, not as yet become an object of envy. Let the balance be held fairly—Slingsby was eminent, but Aldridge was original—Slingsby was above all the dancers of his day, and was unrivalled even in France; but Aldridge was never compared to any other, because he was universally allowed to be like none of them, but in every respect an original.

Let us return to Aldridge. Although Aldridge's whimsical performances, the Fingallian Rant, and other pleasing Hibernian ballets, seemed only calculated for the meridian of Dublin, and would indeed have been no better than clod-hopping directed by any other; yet the skill and management of Aldridge were such as to reconcile them to the taste of the most refined judges of dancing in England. All his Irish jigs, &c. were so improved by his singular address and mode of conducting them, that, while

he continued in London, none was surprised to find the Bog of Allen transplanted, or, if you will, transported, to Drury-lane Theatre. As it would exceed our limits in these memoirs to say more respecting the merits of this excellent dancer, suffice it that his talents must be long remembered in London, and many other places of polite resort, where they have been displayed with their deserved eclat and approbation. Here, therefore, I take leave of my friend, the truly begotten child of Comus; with only stating that he has wisely withdrawn himself from the irksome, degrading tyranny of stage managers, to the city of Edinburgh. Here he most socially lives among judges and encouragers of genius; resolved to finish life's career, as he began it, in the private direction of the *steps* of youth, and

thus enjoy, without envy, the *otium cum dignitate.**

MR. THOMAS ELLARD

Claims our next attention; but without obtruding an opinion of this gentleman as an actor of eminence, he was justly considered a very useful performer. To this character every manager with whom he engaged, in Ireland

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* Since the above was written, poor Aldridge paid the debt of nature about the latter end of May 1793, lamented by a numerous acquaintance. He was attended to his grave by many gentlemen of the first respectability, among whom was Lord Provost Elder. He has left behind him an amiable wife (daughter of his former master, Mr. Samuel Lee of Dublin), two daughters, and a son, whom he has instructed in his own profession; and long may they live, the worthy offspring of so worthy a father!

and England, were ever willing to subscribe. But, still further to his credit, it must be acknowledged that he was truly benevolent, and warmly sincere in his friendship. These virtues will always render him more estimable than if he had shone among the most celebrated of his profession without them. It must, therefore, be a satisfaction to every candid and worthy mind to hear that this deserving character is now happily above the rude blasts of precarious drudgery and dependence. Possessing what the ladies term a *good person*, he attracted the partial notice of a young lady of the city of Exeter. Being prepossessed with his person and address at a private ball, she found means to communicate by a common friend her favourable opinion. With a candour not the less laudable because very unusual, she declared that her hand and

fortune were at her own disposal, and that she knew no one to whom she could more willingly transfer them than to Mr. Ellard. Such an offer was not to be neglected. Ellard was not so enamoured of his profession as to prefer a small salary, and the caprice of managers, to independence and the possession of beauty; the business therefore was regularly commenced, and proceeded with speedy progress towards a happy conclusion.

But notwithstanding the affair was conducted with the greatest caution by the principals, as well as their confidential friend, it was not long before it transpired. It no sooner reached the ears of his sock and buskin brotherhood, than they treated it with their usual mischievous, if not malicious, levity, and the Romeo and Juliet had to endure the fleers and gibes of every

Mercutio of the company; a propensity but too common amongst the gentlemen of the stage. Hamlet speaks well in saying, "Follow that gentleman, but mind you mock him not."

The lady had a rich aunt by whom she was loved with the greatest tenderness, and from whom she had considerable expectations. Although the fortune in her own disposal was but little short of four hundred pounds per annum, yet the reversion of a large fortune on the death of her aunt, who was then almost superannuated, was an object not to be despised. It therefore gave her no little concern that the man of her heart was of a profession whose members were not only execrated by her aunt, but deemed unworthy of notice in this world, and even salvation in the next. Such were the prejudices that Ellard had to encounter; such the

cheveaux de frise through which he had to force his way to the possession of his fair. In vain did the prudent aunt appeal to the reason of the enamoured fair; in vain did she represent that, according to the opinion of some of the celebrated doctors of the Sorbonne, players were possessed with evil spirits, and the chosen receptacles for the earthly abode of the devils. The young lady's passion rendered her deaf alike to argument and reproach. Her resolution was fixed; and Ellard, whether possessed or not, was to be the man of her choice.

And fortunate was it for him that her love was thus firmly founded, as a storm had now gathered which would have effectually destroyed all the fair fabric of his hopes. This tempest was as sudden as it was unexpected.

A newly married man, who may be

termed a wolf in sheep's clothing, excited by Até, or some of her sister Furies, was resolved, if possible, to blight the promised happiness of the contented lovers. To effect his infamous purpose, he began with sending a very friendly, anonymous epistle to the aunt, advising her to prevent her niece from committing the crime of marrying a man already married to a wife then living. He added, that the wife had been tenderly loved, and had borne several children, some of whom were still alive. The claims, he said, of this discarded wife and the abandoned children, would certainly embitter the remainder of the aunt's days.

Had this artifice, as shallow as malignant, succeeded, Ellard's hopes were at an end. But the young lady, with her ordinary discretion, resolved to hear before she condemned, and Ellard was ac-

cordingly sent for, that he might answer to the accusation; so well did she merit the love of this worthy man.

"Mr. Ellard," said the generous lady, "be ingenuous with me, sir—was you ever married?"

"Never, madam," answered Ellard, with no small surprise.

"I could wish you to be candid in the matter," continued she. "I need not say that I have a good opinion of your morals."

"And I hope," rejoined he, "you will never find my conduct such as to merit a forfeiture of that confidence with which you have been pleased to honour my sincerity."

"Had you at any time of your life, sir, any illicit connexion with any woman by whom you have children?"

"Madam," answered the candid Ellard thus urged, "I must confess, to

my shame, that I had; and although I blush to own my moral delinquency in your respectable presence, I must add, that she was a married woman, and I believe may be still living. She was artful, I was young and inexperienced."

"I thank you, sir, for your confession," returned the lady. "Now we can come to the subject in question. There has been sent to my aunt a letter which has created in us both an equal alarm. Here is another addressed to myself; in which the writer, Mr. Wolf, advises me to break off all connexion, which I might be imprudently inclined to form with Mr. Ellard. And here he offers, at his own expence, to depart immediately for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and return to Exeter accompanied by your wife, and as many of your children as he may find living."

The innocent Ellard was motionless

with surprise. He acknowledged that the infamous Carrol, the woman who had seduced his youth, might be still living, but he denied that she had the least claim on him as a wife. He was the bolder in this assertion, knowing that he had a most incontestable witness of its veracity. His witness was a man of unimpeached integrity, and who was then in Mr. Bates's company at Sunderland, which is near the town where the insidious Wolf had fixed the present residence of his pretended wife. This honest man had known Mr. Ellard from a boy, and was equally acquainted with the pretended wife, Betty Carrol. He also not only knew her *real husband*, but was well acquainted with the cause of that husband turning her out of doors. Ellard had no sooner seen the folly of his attachment, than he adopted the example of the husband, and dis-

burthened himself of a plague which he found sat heavy on his existence. He therefore took the prudent step of leaving her, even at the expence of abandoning a good situation in Crow-street Theatre, and coming to England with Mr. Thomas Jefferson, who was just going to sail from the port of Dublin for Exeter.

Ellard was thus enabled to assert his innocence with the boldness of truth, as he could oppose the assertion of Wolf, seconded by the testimony of the infamous Betty, and by the more respectable evidence of his friend at Sunderland.

The lady was thus satisfied that she had been grossly abused, and with the characteristic generosity of her sex, was eager to compensate her lover for the momentary injustice of her suspicions.

"I thank you most sincerely, sir," said the young lady, "for this unreserved declaration. You have eased my

mind of a pressure that was too heavy for my weakness; but now I am satisfied. And if my doubts of your worth have made no alteration in your opinion of me, my hand and fortune are freely yours."

Thus terminated this unpardonable act of malignity; an act so much the more atrocious, as it had been provoked by no enmity, no wrong in word or deed, of the worthy Ellard. It had, indeed, no other source than that of envy, which repines at the good of another as an evil happening to himself.

To the merited disappointment of Wolf and his associates, Ellard was at length happily married to the lady of his hope. The wedding being without the consent and against the desire of the aunt, she would not permit her name to be mentioned in her presence. Mrs. Ellard was therefore obliged to re-

sume her maiden name whenever she visited her relation. Nor could even the obdurate old lady be prevailed upon to be thoroughly reconciled to her niece, on any other terms than the removal of Mr. Ellard to some remote part, where she could never be offended with the sight of him. Being convinced that his compliance was the only means of relieving the uneasiness of his wife, and securing their future expectations from the aunt, Ellard prudently withdrew to Teignmouth, a pleasant sea-port about fifteen miles from Exeter. Here my friend Ellard purchased a spot of ground on which he built a handsome house, which he decently furnished. To shew himself also an œconomist, as well as a man of taste, he began to perform in earnest in his own Eden a part in which he had frequently appeared on a barren stage. This new-made Paradise afford-

ed Ellard considerable pleasure, in despite of the penance to which the aunt had thought she had condemned him, by thus secluding him from the company and converse of his former companions the players.

And here I conclude this account of a worthy friend with observing, that no man is more respected in his neighbourhood than Mr. Ellard. And the late Lord Courtenay, whose old English hospitality all Devonshire has witnessed, always invited the worthy jolly companion Ellard to his hunting and convivial parties, where equal plenty and festivity ever reigned.

Farewell, my honest and respected friend. Disregard your unprovoked enemies, and let this distich live in your memory:

"Short is the date in which ill acts prevail
"But honesty's a rock will never fail!"

STEELE.

We have no need of foreigners of any description to gratify the eye, ear, or any other sense we chuse to make proper use of. We have already proved that Aldridge and Slingsby were as highly qualified for the gentle undulating movement on the boards of a ball-room, or the high-flying graces which it seems are held to be indispensibly necessary to please the great and small vulgar. In painting, the *cognoscenti* allow we are not excelled by any modern artists now existing; and Sir Joshua Reynolds, for delicacy, may, without flattery, be compared to the best masters of the Italian school. In literature, the British writers in every branch of it are confessedly unrivalled. Music, that charmer of the soul, both vocal and instrumental, has made rapid strides within these thirty years past towards perfection. Singers especially we have, and of our own na-

tive growth, and, what should more particularly recommend them to our attention, we either *do* or *should* understand the language of their songs.

And here it may not appear impertinent to give a few words upon some of our female singers, as their excellence has given dignity to an art which had been deemed hitherto to have little connection with any thing of science.

The most celebrated singer in the beginning of this, I suppose I must rather say of the last century, was Mrs. Tofts. However the powers of this lady have been extolled, she was in truth but little superior to one of the ballad-singers of our public gardens, or minor theatres. She had admirers, however, amongst those whose praise was fame, and whose nod the stamp imperial of merit. Addison and Steele endeavoured to outrun each other in their worship to this god-

dess of their idolatry. The sprightly Farquhar compares her to the lyre of Orpheus, causing his Aimwell to exclaim,

> What do I hear;
> Soft Orpheus play, or fair Toffida sing?

I have heard observed, and most readily believe, that were this female Orpheus to return again, and rear her head upon the present stage, she would be received with every thing but enthusiasm. Amongst many other improvements of the world, it has become too wise for such rapture, at least to be moved to it by any excellence of mere natural talents. The concurrence of musical science with vocal excellence is now required; and to my thoughts, this is no inconsiderable improvement on the age which preceded us.

As to the person of Mrs. Tofts, an ancient friend of mine reports it to

have exceeded in beauty any of our present singers, and perhaps the greater part of her reputation, even as a singer, must be imputed to this source. We are seldom nice or discriminating in our admiration of beauty. Let her please us by the possession of personal gifts, and however inferior she may be in any other talent, we seldom scruple to allow her excellence.

The name of Storace cannot but suggest itself among the list of singers, and the name recalls to my memory an anecdote of the well-known Trusler, the grandfather of this lady. Her mother, Miss Trusler, was celebrated for a confectionary talent of some domestic esteem, that of making the best *cakes*, at the least possible expence. But the most capital cake ever made by that family was, when Storace's grandfather made such a *grand cake* of the public.

The pecuniary affairs of Sherrard and Trusler having been long in a crab-like motion, "*procul este profani*" became their motto, and "*non est inventus*" the consequence. Trusler died, that is to say, was generally lamented as dead; when, after some interval, lo! the grave gave up her dead, and Trusler re-appeared as a pleader; that is to say, whenever troubled for his debts, he pleaded the Statute of Limitation.

Mrs. Clive

Was originally servant to Miss Eleanor Knowles, afterwards Mrs. Young, mother to the present Sir George Young, and Mr. Thomas Young, who, in 1774, came out at Covent-garden Theatre in Macheath, which he performed nine nights with much celebrity. When Mrs. Clive lived with Miss Knowles,

who then lodged at Mrs. Snell's, a fan-painter in Church-row, Houndsditch, Mr. Watson, many years box-keeper at Drury-lane and Richmond, kept the Bell Tavern, directly opposite to Mrs. Snell's. At this house was held the Beef-steak Club, instituted by Mr. Beard, Mr. Dunstall, Mr. Woodward, Stoppalear, Bencraft, Giffard, &c. &c. Kitty Rafter, being one day washing the steps of the door, and singing, the windows of the club-room being open, they were instantly crowded by the company, who were all enchanted with her natural grace and simplicity. This circumstance alone led her to the stage, under the auspices of Mr. Beard and Mr. Dunstall; how she succeeded, charmed, and astonished, is needless here to relate, farther than that she quitted the stage with a fame, in her line of acting, not inferior to any of her pre-

decessors. I have given the above anecdote as I received it from Mr. Thomas Young.

Tom Young.

This gentleman is well known in the theatrical world under the denomination of a good-natured fellow, but is in fact a truly sensible, well-bred man. His leading feature was, a charitable disposition to people all hospitals with *stray babes*, and a vindictive spirit in denouncing vengeance against all parishes that did not bribe him to spare them. "No man has made so many chambermaids lose their voices, by rising in the cold night to let him in to their madam."

In the year 1765, he was playing in Whitely's company in Manchester, and was distinguished very much by the partial attentions of a widow lady of

extensive property. Being too honourable to take advantage of her weakness in his favour, he rejected her ardent and repeated offers to meet her at the altar of Hymen: at that period she had a legacy of 1200 guineas bequeathed to her, which sum she gave him to purchase a commission in Elliot's dragoons, then quartered at Manchester. He applied to the General, who informed him a cornetcy was to be disposed of, but could not pointedly say the exact time, only he imagined it would not be for sale in less time than six months. The late Mr. Sam. Touchet, banker, was in company when Young was mentioning this, and said, "Young, I'll allow you 5 per cent. for the money till you want it, if you'll place it in our house." He did so, prudently thinking the interest would be something towards purchasing his horse, &c. &c.

On the Monday Mr. Touchet touched the 1200 guineas, on the Thursday following stopped payment for 800,000 l., and a few days after shot himself.

Soon after this event, I received a letter from him from the West Indies, and in speaking of this circumstance he says, " My only consolation was, in finding that generous woman so far from upbraiding me in aught, she only said I should have placed the money in her hands; but, blind to her partiality, I quitted Manchester, I quitted Mrs. ********, I quitted ******** hall, I quitted a worthy woman, and twenty-five hundred pounds per annum, in pursuit of random schemes."

Soon after Tom Young went abroad, Mrs. M********* was married to a gentleman then at Manchester, belonging to a new raised regiment, and well

known by the epithet of Spanking Roger. She soon after died, and left him in possession of all her estate, a part of which he has sold for near 100,000 l., and holds a very large and valuable portion of it at this moment.

Mr. Incledon.

The present male singers of the British stage infinitely surpass those of any other nation of Europe. In strength united with sweetness, who has ever approached the excellence of Incledon? The silent raptures I have beheld a house in, when he has sung the popular verses of the gentle and witty Gay, known by the name of *Black eyed Susan*, gave me more real delight than even the *Stabat Mater*, when accompanied with a band, whose harmony was almost seraphic. Yet our countryman, to shew his superior skill in the melt-

ing moods, charmed us without assistance from any instrument of music whatever. O my infatuated countrymen, how long will you suffer yourselves to be duped by a band of insolent foreigners? Learn some wisdom from one book at least, that is replete with good sense, a commodity which you are allowed by all the world to possess in a distinguished manner. The precept I would be understood to recommend to your serious notice here, is, not to take your children's meat, and throw it to dogs. I will in this place remind you of a verse in an old ballad of Harry Carey, the poet and musician, wherein he pathetically laments the degeneracy of our forefathers, some sixty or seventy years ago, when he makes a booby squire lash them in the following words;—

" And there's your English actors go
With many a hungry belly;
While heaps of gold are lavish'd—oh!
On Signior Farinelli."

Mr. Kelly.

The scientific Kelly comes next to be considered. His exquisite taste and judgment justly merit the countenance and praise of the connoisseurs in music. This gentleman we have always, or with very little intermission, among us. He was, as far as I can understand, early taught the pleasing science, and sung, when but a little boy, at a Romish chapel, upon Sundays and other festivals, the *Lucis Creator*, and *Magnificat*, in tones so harmonious, that his promising abilities raised him friends among the opulent catholics of the capital of Ireland, the place of his nati-

vity. A sum was raised sufficient to send him in a respectable manner to Italy, the very centre of instruction in his line, that of Latin church-music: but the stage has more allurements than the church for one of an amorous complexion. No wonder then, that Mr. Kelly made choice of the flowery paths of pleasure in the gay season of his youth, and in a line more suitable to his natural disposition, as variety, the darling passion of youth, invited him to take a full swing. The graver music to which he had been accustomed, and the paucity of its inflections, required not the exertions of one, who had such flattering expectations of pleasing all sects and degrees.

Charles Bannister.

Mr. Charles Bannister, though not ranked among the sweet singers, has held, and most deservingly, a high reputation, and that within his own magic circle, where none dare tread but he. Darley has merit in the same line of singing, and when mellowed by the stealing hours of time, will well befit the seat of majesty, which Bannister so ably filled, and render us, no doubt, as happy in his reign, as we have long been in that of my friend Charles the first.

I have been told by many old frequenters of Covent-garden Theatre, and such as were held to be very good judges, that Charles Bannister was the legitimate son of old Leveridge. Whether it was that the bard cast his cloak

upon my friend Charles, or by what other way he caught the spirit of the man, who could boast of yielding pleasure to many of the great-grandfathers of the children of the present age; yet so it is, he has been for many years allowed to have possessed a *double spirit* of his vocal father's: and his restoration to his lawful dominion over the choral tribe, in this month of January, 1792, gave more real satisfaction to the numerous friends and strenuous supporters of merit, than any piece of theatrical justice that has occurred for these many years past.

Le Grand Pitrot.

The following instance of folly, insolence, and arrogance, in that celebrated dancer, Le Grand Pitrot, well known throughout all Europe for his superior

professional excellence, will be another striking instance to the many which I could relate, of the presumptuous self-sufficiency of these foreign caperers.

This consequential prince of all the skipping, capering tribe, had the august appellation of *le grand* tacked to his parental name. The pride, obstinacy, and merit of this performer, became proverbial at all the courts of Europe, and he took particular care to mark his own character. At Vienna, he chose to appear only in the last act of a ballet. On the Emperor's desiring that he should make his entrée at the end of the first act, he answered the officer, "that men of talent never made themselves too cheap." The monarch instantly left the opera, and the whole court followed his example. Pitrot, on being informed of this, stepped for-

ward, and in the face of the whole remaining audience, thus addressed the dancers: "Mes enfants, nous dansons pour nous-mêmes, et non pas pour l'Empéreur." And it is said, that in his life he never danced so well. However strange it may appear, the Emperor forgave the insult; and when he understood that Pitrot's engagement was finished, and he upon the point of departing, he sent this favourite exotic a gold snuff-box, with his picture set round with brilliants.* Pitrot was un-

* We can boast something similar to this in England; for, in 1735, his present Majesty's father, then Prince of Wales, made a present of a fine wrought gold snuff-box, richly set with diamonds and rubies, in which was inclosed a pair of diamond knee-buckles, as also a purse of 100 guineas, to the famous Signior Farinelli.

At Madrid this singer received annually 10,000 dollars, besides presents and other advantages.

der the hands of his hair-dresser, when a colonel belonging to the Emperor's guards delivered him the present. Pitrot took it after a careless manner, looked at it, then pressed his thumb upon the chrystal and crushed the picture; which done, he gave the box to his hair-dresser, and bade the officer acquaint his master, that that was the way he disposed of baubles sent him by men he did not think worthy of his friendship—then stepped into his carriage, and just got out of the Emperor's dominions time enough to save his head, a party of hussars having been dispatched in pursuit of the fugitive; and the more was the pity, they arrived too late.

He was told of his lucky escape, yet did it not serve to mend his manners in the least: for, in Ber-

lin, the Emperor sent to him, expressing his desire that he would resume his station in Vienna; and that on account of his superior merit, he had forgot what had passed.—"Tell the Emperor," said Pitrot, "he knows I am not a fool." The King of Prussia desired him to get up a most magnificent ballet, leaving the expence of it entirely to him. But the charge was so very extravagant, that Frederic remonstrated. But the intrepid dealer in *hops* told that bold prince, that the honour of Pitrot was not to be limited by the purses of monarchs; and that the king, in future, might take the trifling part (the charges) upon himself.*

* In 1774, Gabrielli was in Petersburgh; previous to her engagement by the Empress, she was at Milan, the price she demanded was 1500l.

Are you not surprised, my reader, at hearing that such an arrogant scoundrel escaped punishment, in two such arbitrary sovereignties as Austria and Prussia are known to be? Now you shall see a specimen of his behaviour when in your own duped country. When he was here as ballet master, in some dispute with Fiorville, he threatened to kick him, if he did not obey his directions. Then turning round, said, "If there is any stupid lord, or gentleman, who pretending to judge of the merits of a dancer without know-

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sterling per annum, beside a house and carriage; nor would she take less. She was remonstrated with on the unreasonableness of so enormous a salary; and to induce her to make some abatement, they assured her that a Field Marshal had no more. "If that be the case," she said, "I would advise all her Majesty's Field Marshals *to sing.*"

ing how to pull off their hats, shall dare to take your part, Pitrot will prove that he can use his sword as well as his legs." If this outrage on good manners does not serve to work an effectual cure in you, my sensible countrymen, your case must be desperate indeed, and *common sense* must give you over, to mix among the incurable.

In France, at the moment when he was about to begin a dance with the sister of Madame du Thé, the father of the present Duke of Orleans whispered to her, that he should sup with her; Pitrot heard him, and told the lady, that he was resolved to supplant the duke. The lady modestly told him, this his highness would give her an hundred louis d'ors. Well, replied Pitrot, I will give you a thousand. On her expressing her doubts, he laid his

hand on his breast, and replied, "You shall have them, *foi de Pitrot*;" and the next morning he kept his word.

This eccentric man, of whom a great variety of anecdotes of this nature might be related, after being reduced, by acts of imprudence, to the utmost necessity, when Le Picq went to Russia, was entrusted with all his schools, which brought him in eight hundred pounds a year! Emerging from wretchedness, on a sudden, to a state of affluence, he launched immediately into his usual manner of living, which imprudence obliged him in three years to quit the kingdom: but he has since returned, and is at this moment in Calais, without even a coat to cover him! A strange reverse of fortune, for a man, whose establishments in Prussia, Vienna, Russia, France, &c. &c. were

more like those of sovereign princes than a ballet master. For example, when at Vienna, his equipage was superb in a most extravagant degree; he always had three servants behind his berlin, in the richest liveries, and a running footman preceding him. When he was established in Le Picq's school, he hired two furnished houses; in each of which he kept a female friend, with a carriage a-piece for the accommodation of the fair-ones.

Here was a species of mad extravagance, only to be equalled by our honest tars, who, in the war that raged in the year 1762, took the Hermione, a rich Spanish ship. On the Active's sailors receiving the first part of their prize-money, at Plymouth, the poor fellows were at a loss how to get rid of their troublesome load of ready cash. Among

many other methods of dissipation, the following was adopted by one thoughtless blade. He hired three post chaises, which were occupied thus: in the first was deposited a gold-headed cane he had bought that morning of a Jew, whom he believed he had *taken in* most egregiously. In the next his lass, bedizened with ribbons of the *true blue* colour: and in the third he seated himself with a flaming *point d'Espagne* hat on his knees, and two double doubloons placed on each of his breasts, tacked to his outward garment with yellow sewing-silk. These pieces of whimsical grandeur he called his stars of the order of the blue jacket. In this order the cavalcade set off from the Pope's-head for the Cherry-tree on the road leading to Exeter, and was attended by a prodigious crowd of men and wo-

men; who, when honest Jack gave the signal to the drivers to stop, which was frequently repeated, gave him three cheers—and in return for the honour done him by this mob, Jack gave orders for a *red hot* bowl of punch to be presented to the blatant beast, at the public house where he chose to receive their huzzas. When arrived at the Cherry-tree, the end of their first day's trip, Jack was blest with the sight of a number of his ship-mates, who were regaling themselves and their numerous friends, with the best the house afforded. They were surrounded with Israelite dealers in every kind of trinkets to allure the eye, and pick the pockets of the honest tars. Every man of the fortunate crew agreed to purchase each two watches—bawbles too must be bought for their occasional spouses, as

the disinterested descendants of old father Abraham told the jolly fellows, that their ladies would become *chewels*, as well as the *doches* of the land. Such recommendations, accompanied with sweet blandishments from the ladies themselves, could hardly fail—plenty of the ready was squandered away in a short time. But to crown all their freakish acts, little short of insanity, when they had refreshed on a vast quantity of beef steaks fried in butter, with plenty of onions, they unanimously agreed to fry their watches in the grease which was used in dressing their meat; and some among the crew were so nice in palate, that they could not put up with the indelicate fare of their companions, but must order spinnage to be boiled for them: and, strange to tell, yet true it is, caused

their already dressed tatlers, as they termed their watches, to be served up to them amongst their spinnage, in lieu of eggs!

These marks and tokens of temporary madness in the rough hardy sons of Neptune, manifested on many similar occasions, are more excusable, than I hope will be allowed in a man, who was all his life accustomed to the company of personages in the highest and most exalted spheres of life. Pitrot's arrogance should, one might reasonably suppose, put people in high life upon their guard, not to be daily imposed upon by such whiffling, unnecessary fellows, who only laugh in their sleeves at the stupid credulity of the persons of quality and fashion, who encourage them to be insolent to their

supporters. England has long been the standing jest of these exotics.

It is not long since that some of our travelling gentlemen beheld in Italy a monument of our gross weakness, which was raised out of a small part of the sum carried from hence by Signor Farinelli. It is a very superb building, in which he dwelt, and chose to dignify it with the significant appellation of the *English folly*. Sennessino, and the Cuzzoni, were very little behind the first-named charmer of the fair of Great Britain, in sweeping away with them to their native countries enough to buy the fee-simple of some of their petty princes, could they have thus alienated their estates and honours from their posterity.

FATHER O'LEARY.

In the year 1787, I dined with a party at Cork, where Father O'Leary was one of the company; he appeared to me as a man in whom there is an habitual amiable disposition of mind, mild, meek, and peaceable; devoid of that rigid stiffness, or angry zeal, which blemish the characters of some men, otherwise great and valuable: there is such a gentle, affable, sweetness of temper in his conversation, with such a vein of pleasantry and good sense running through it, as to constitute him a most desirable, instructive, and entertaining companion. When the intemperate, indiscreet zeal of the Roman Catholics, carried them to an unwarrantable height in the province of Mun-

ster, he did not fail to shew those who were immediately under his influence, that they were destroying both their *civil* and *religious* interests, and acting to the reproach of common christianity: in short, his heart will not let him be an inattentive observer, but forces him to take a deep share in the *sorrows* and *joys* of his fellow-creatures.

The only draw-back upon the pleasantry of the after-dinner chat was the forward impertinence of a young spark, who every now and then, (devoid of all politeness, and totally forgetting that respect which good sense will always pay to Father O'Leary's liberality,) laboured to raise a laugh at the expence of his brotherhood of the church of Rome. At length an unfortunate attempt to sport with this

worthy priest, relieved us from his further fooleries, and gave an opportunity of enjoying the smartness of O'Leary's repartee, to which he was at length provoked, even in despite of his Christian patience.

The puppy, in his pick-tooth manner, asked O'Leary what family he had? "But," continued he, "I beg pardon, in your church you are not allowed to marry. You understand chymistry, I suppose, doctor? Pray, can you tell me what quantity of chastity, extracted from the sanctimony of a nunnery, would cure the priesthood of lechery?"

Thinking the good man was firing with an acrimonious answer, he again hastily begged his pardon, and said, "he did not mean to offend him; that he highly honoured the clergy; that he was himself the *son of a priest*."

"Are you so," said O'Leary (taking his snuff), "why then, by your own account, you must either be *a liar*, or a son of a w——."

END OF VOL. II.

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